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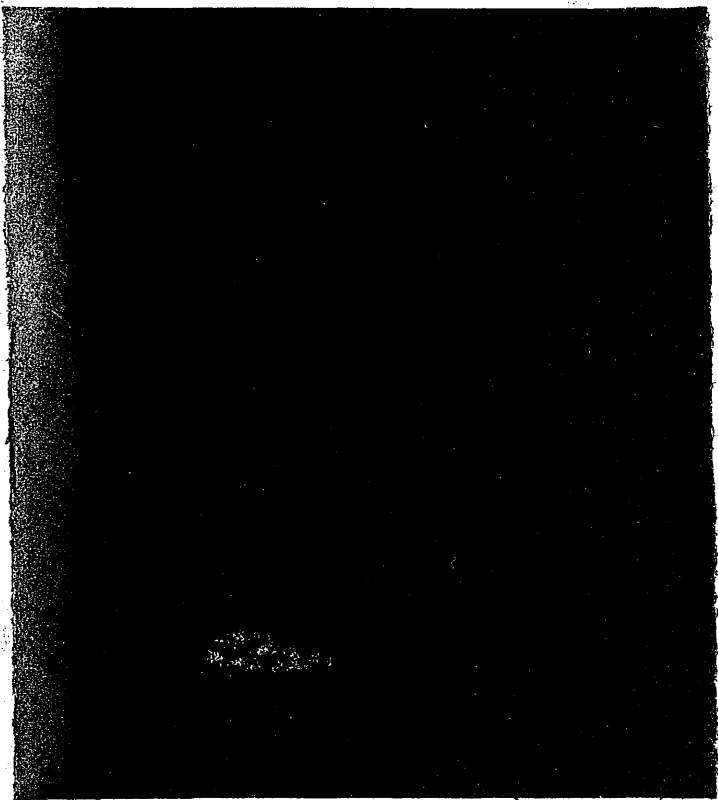
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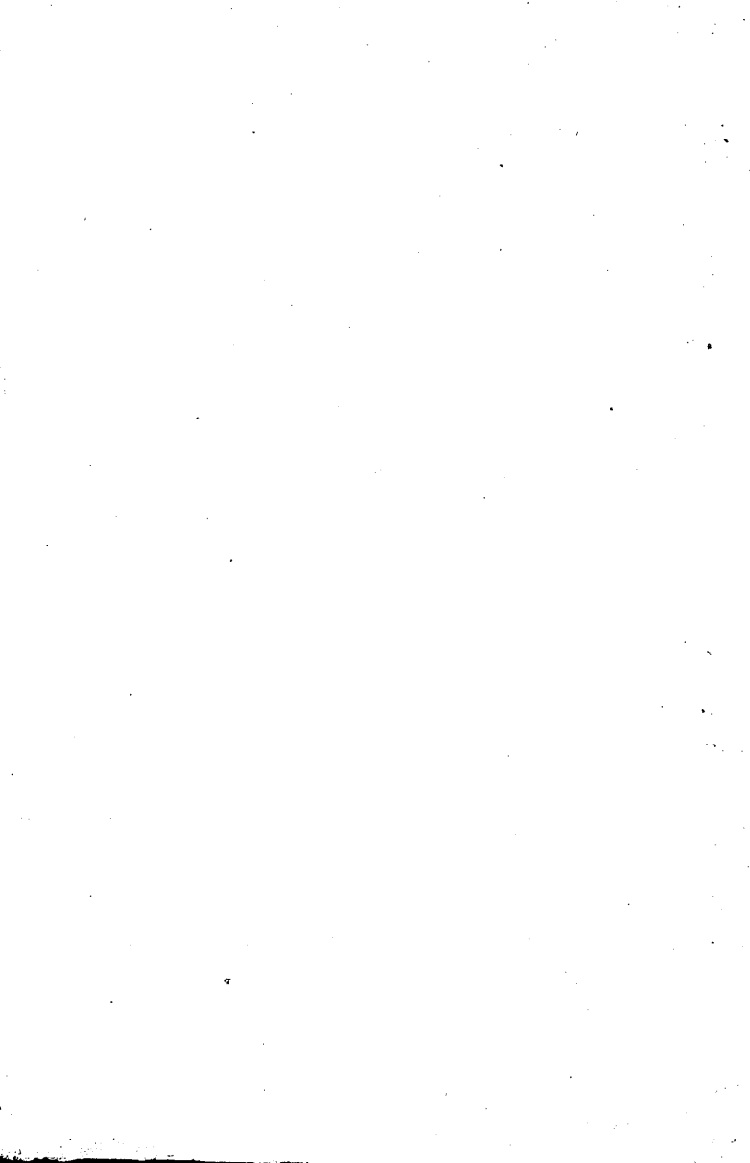
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MODERN POPERY:

A SERIES OF LETTERS

ON SOME OF ITS MORE IMPORTANT ASPECTS.

BY

B. EVANS.

"If we professed to follow human reason, ye might indeed be disquieted; but since we declare that our faith is drawn from the Scriptures, and they are plain and true, ye may easily discover the truth. He whose belief accordeth with the Bible is a Christian; but he who is at variance with it, is far removed from Christianity."

Chrysostom.

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TO THE
RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY,
THIS VOLUME,
ON A SUBJECT IN WHICH HIS LORDSHIP
HAS EVER MANIFESTED A DEEP AND ENLIGHTENED INTEREST,
IS,
BY HIS KIND PERMISSION,
INSCRIBED, BY HIS
LORDSHIP'S GRATEFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

B. EVANS.



ADVERTISEMENT.

During the agitations of 1851, the writer's attention, in common with that of thousands, was again called to Romish movements in this country. With the strifes and the controversy between Protestantism and this anti-christian system he was somewhat familiar; but he thought he would reëxamine the question. Many of our standard works occupy specific and well-defined ground; they are invaluable: but it occurred to the writer, that in the main the popular literature of Romanists had been to a considerable extent overlooked. Into this department he at once entered, and the result was given in a series of letters, published at the time, but confined to the immediate locality of the writer's residence. Again and again the wider circulation of these letters has been urged upon him; and, after long delay, he has revised, enlarged, and, he hopes, improved, them. No book on Popery can fail to exhibit enough of the anti-christian spirit of the system, as to make thoughtful men shrink from it; but the writer thinks that the picture which these pages exhibit, the materials for which have been collected from the exhibitions of its friends, will fill every reader with horror. To repress, to overthrow, entirely to

annihilate deadly error, is the duty of all who love humanity, and the interests of truth and righteousness,—only, however, by moral means. The writer is second to none in his unmingled hatred of the doctrines he has passed in review; but to the civil rights of Romanists he is still an unwavering friend.

B. E.

Scarborough,
April, 1855.

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MODERN POPERY.

LETTER I.

ROME AND THE BIBLE.

I propose, in a series of letters, to touch upon some of the peculiarities of Romanism. Knowingly, I will not pervert a single opinion which you hold, or attribute to you any practices which your writers do not warrant. But before doing this, you will allow me a single remark. Protestants and Romanists hold many dogmas in common. One as cordially believes these as the other: they are the property of the whole church of Christ. Nothing which you believe as vital, or fundamental to the religion of Jesus, is disregarded by any evangelical dissidents from the Church of Rome. All the great truths which can be fairly drawn from inspired Scripture, are held with more tenacity by us, than by all the bishops and cardinals which for centuries have ruled your community. With us they are vital and absorbing, the Alpha and Omega of our faith. By Popery, I mean something else; dogmas which you have engrafted upon the christian verities, which the corruption of ages has accumulated, or which you still allow to obscure the lustre and paralyse the power of these great primitive truths. The peculiarities of Romanism stand, I think, in contrast to these, and distinguish you from other christian communities. It is these which appear to me to give your system its fearful anti-christian character,—which rob you of one of the most precious gifts of heaven, mental liberty, and subject you to a slavery which has no parallel in the world's history. Upon some of these peculiarities I propose to touch in these letters.

As the basis of all revealed religion must be the Divine Word, contained in the Old and New Testaments, we cannot do better than begin with the doctrine of the Church of Rome on the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

That your Church withholds these from the laity has been affirmed again and again; but, I admit, by priests and laymen as frequently denied. In the Protestant sense unquestionably there is no freedom, and we think that the restrictions are so many, and so close, as to amount to an entire interdict, with certain exceptions, over which your priesthood has no control. Let us see what your authorities say upon this matter, and men can form their own judgment.

Fleury, one of your own historians, says that the first prohibition of Holy Scripture which he knows, was issued by the Council of Thoulouse in 1229. It was presided over, I believe, by a Legate of Gregory IX. The following is the decree :—“ *It shall not be permitted to laymen to have the books of the Old and New Testaments; only they who out of devotion desire it, may have a Psalter, a Breviary, and the Hours of the Virgin. But we absolutely forbid them to have the above-mentioned books translated into the vulgar tongue.*”¹

A few years afterwards, another Council, 1246, enacted that the Inquisitors should not suffer the people to possess any religious book whatever, either in the vulgar tongue or in Latin, *and that the clergy should not have any translation of the Scriptures in their possession.*²

Later on, in this country, under the influence of the priesthood, a royal edict was issued in 1546, for “abolishing all English books published under pretence of expounding and declaring the truth of God’s Scripture;” and it was ordered “that henceforth no man, woman, or person, of what estate, condition, or degree soever he be, or they be, shall, after the last day of August next ensuing,

(1) Jones’s History of Waldenses, ii. p. 134. It is given in substance by Taylor in his Popery, its Character and Crimes, p. 15. Urwick’s Triple Crown, p. 290.

(2) See Taylor’s Popery, where the authorities are given. See, also, Spanheim’s Annals, cent. xii. p. 394.

receive or have, take or keep, in his possession, the text of the New Testament of Tyndal's or Coverdale's translation into English."¹

I need not inform you that after the Council of Trent had finished its deliberations, the fathers assembled ordered an index of prohibited books to be prepared. It was accomplished under the highest authority of the Church, Pius IV. In March, 1564, the index was issued. From one of its rules I quote the following:—

"Inasmuch as it is manifest, from experience, that if the Holy Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue, be indiscriminately allowed to every one, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise from it, it is, on this point, referred to the judgment of the bishops, or inquisitors, who may, by the advice of the priest or confessor, permit the reading of the Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue by Catholic authors, to those persons whose faith and piety they apprehend will be augmented, and not injured by it; and this permission they must have in writing. But if any one shall have the presumption to read or possess it without such written permission, he shall not receive absolution until he have first delivered up such Bible to the ordinary. Booksellers, however, who shall sell, or otherwise dispose of Bibles in the vulgar tongue, to any person not having such permission, shall forfeit the value of the books, to be applied by the bishop to some pious use; and be subjected by the bishop to such other penalties as the bishop shall judge proper, according to the quality of the offence. But regulars shall neither read nor purchase such Bibles without a special license from their superiors."²

Let me now remind you that subsequent to this the English College at Douay was compelled, by the force of

(1) Taylor, p. 16. Evidence of the burning of Tyndal's version may be seen in Anderson's *Annals of the English Bible*. Book i. §. iii., vii., &c.

(2) Mendham Indexes, p. 34, rule iv. It may not be amiss to place in a note one or two other rules, that the reader may see with what an iron grasp Rome holds the minds of her subjects:—"Books of controversy betwixt the Catholics and heretics of the present time, written in the vulgar tongue, are not to be indiscriminately allowed, but are to be subject to the same regulations as Bibles in the vulgar tongue. As to those works in the vulgar tongue which treat of morality, contemplation, confession, and similar subjects, and which contain nothing contrary to sound doctrine, there is no reason why they should be prohibited: the same may be said also of sermons in the vulgar tongue designed for the people. And if in any kingdom or province any books have been hitherto prohibited, as containing things not proper to be read, without selection, by all sorts of persons, they may be allowed by the bishop and *inquisitor*, after having corrected them, if written by Catholic authors." Again, look at this:—"Heirs to testamentary executors shall make no use of the books of the deceased, nor in any way transfer them to others, until they have presented a catalogue of them to the deputies, and obtained their license, under pain of the confiscation of the books, or the infliction of such other punishment as the bishops or inquisitors

circumstances, to publish an English edition of the Scriptures, with notes. I ask attention to the following, from the preface to the New Testament :—

“ Which causeth the Holy Church not to *forbid utterly* any Catholic translation, though she *allow not* the publishing or reading of any absolutely, and without exception or limitation; knowing by her divine and most sincere wisdom, how, where, when, and to whom her Master’s and Spouse’s gifts are to be bestowed to the most good of the faithful, and, therefore, neither generally permitteth that which must needs do hurt to the unworthy, nor absolutely condemneth that which may do much good to the worthy. Whereupon the order, which many a wise man wished for before, was taken by the deputies of the late famous Council of Trent in this behalf, and confirmed by supreme authority, that the Holy Scriptures, though truly and catholicly translated into vulgar tongues, yet may not be indifferently read of all men, nor of any other than such as have *express license thereunto from their lawful ordinaries*, with good testimony from their curates or confessors, that they be humble, discreet, and devout persons, and like to take much good, and no harm thereby. Which prescript, though in these days of ours it cannot be so precisely observed, as in other times and places, where there is more due respect of the Church’s authority, rule, and discipline: yet we trust all wise and godly persons will use the matter, in the meanwhile, with such moderation, meekness, and subjection of heart, as the handling of so sacred a book, the sincere senses of God’s truth therein, the holy canons, councils, reason, and religion do require.”

Few men, Sir, have had greater influence in your Church in this country than the late Dr. Milner. He was subtle, erudite, a Bishop and Vicar Apostolic, and conversant with the peculiarities of your faith. “The Tridentine Fathers,” he says, “make no distinction between Bibles in the vulgar tongue, with notes, and those without notes; *and it is evidently impossible to add any notes whatever to the sacred text*, which will make it a safe and proper elementary book of instruction for the illiterate poor.”¹ There can be no mistake, Sir; the

shall deem proper, according to the contumacy or quality of the delinquent.” “Finally, it is enjoined on all the faithful, that no one presume to keep or read any books contrary to these rules, or prohibited by this index. But if any one keep or read any books composed by heretics, or the writings of any author suspected of heresy or false doctrine, he shall instantly incur the sentence of excommunication; and those who read or keep works interdicted on another account, besides the mortal sin committed, shall be severely punished at the will of the bishop.”—*Ibid*, pp. 35, 38, 41. In a subsequent index, Walton’s Polyglot was condemned.—*Ibid*, p. 102.

(1) Protestant, i. p. 278.

Bible is so thoroughly bad, in the estimation of this distinguished prelate, that all the infallible wisdom of your holy and apostolic Church fails, in her Notes, to render it ever a safe vehicle of instruction to the masses of society. Rome will allow you to luxuriate in all the luscious sensualities of Anacreon or Ovid, to wander without restraint in all the fields of Pagan literature; but the words of infinite and immaculate purity cannot, with all the aids which your sainted doctors could supply, be made safe in the hands of the people. No wonder that the Fathers at Trent imposed such restrictions upon the free circulation of the Word of a holy God! But, Sir, do you really believe this? Can your good sense admit it? I will readily grant that the doctor may not mean this. He, perhaps, intended to say that the Bible could not be made "a safe and proper elementary book of instruction for the illiterate poor, *and our Church retain her despotic influence over them.*" Take which you like. I cannot see that his language admits of any other fair interpretation. The Bible is either injurious to morals, or dangerous to the Church. That it is to the latter, I have no doubt. That he meant this I feel morally certain; and I feel confirmed in this opinion by the late ex-Master of her Majesty's Mint, who, when opposing the circulation of the Bible in Ireland, said, "It is not unlikely that they would contract opinions inconsistent with the meaning invariably annexed by Roman Catholics" to it.¹ This is the real ground of priestly hostility! The free circulation of the Scriptures and the claims of the Church of Rome cannot exist together. For no one can be conversant with the history of the Vatican, and dream for a moment that, if it sustained its lofty and arrogant pretensions, whatever its moral tendency, it would interdict this great boon of heaven to a dark and sinful world!

Still later we find his Holiness, in 1819, warning the Irish clergy against the Bible, as tending "*to infect with the fatal poison of depraved doctrine*" the minds of the children; and urging the bishops "*with undoubted zeal to*

(1) Carson's Works, ii., p. 15.

endeavour to prevent the wheat from being choked by the tares." To this and other efforts, Von Aschbach, one of your own writers, refers in his Church Lexicon,—

"When about the commencement of the present century the Protestant Bible Societies began to disseminate the Sacred Scriptures in all languages, and among all classes, the ancient regulations which restricted the reading of the Bible were renewed. Pius VII. (1816, 1817), Leo XII. (1824), Pius VIII. (1829), and, finally, Gregory XVI. (1844), issued wise decrees against the Bible Societies which flooded the world with innumerable Bibles. All Bibles, then, are interdicted which are not acknowledged as correct by the ecclesiastical authority, and the reading of the Bible is allowed only to those laymen who are recognised as sufficiently instructed, and are provided with approved Bibles."¹

I will only add another fact as evincing the unconquerable aversion of your Church to anything which would encourage the laity to read the Scriptures. Abbe Quesnal published the following sentence in one of his works:—"It is useful and necessary at all times, in all places, and for all sorts of people, to study and know the spirit, purity, and mysteries of the Scriptures. The reading of the Holy Scriptures is for everybody!" Need I say that a proposition which commends itself to our intelligent natures, was condemned by his Holiness, "as offensive to pious ears, scandalous, pernicious, rash, seditious, blasphemous."² Would it not have finished the climax to add, "and most deadly to our apostolic and priestly power"?

Affecting as this must be to every right-thinking mind, yet, Sir, the case would not be complete were I to leave it here. Apparently those of you who may be trusted, are allowed to read a certain Bible; but, practically, where Popery has undivided power, it is only a form and no reality. In this country, for obvious reasons, there is some liberty; but where there is no Protestant influence to save you from the fulness of spiritual despotism, the Bible is unknown. In every purely Popish country under heaven it is so. Look at Spain, Portugal, Italy, the States of the New World, and those of the

(1) Vol. i. p. 728. See British Quarterly Review, August, 1851.

(2) Elliot's Romanism, p. 21.

East, where your influence predominates. But for a moment let us glance at Rome; the source and centre of all power to the Catholic world. If anywhere, surely here, your system will be perfect. If anywhere, we have a right, beyond all doubt, to look for the full development of all its capabilities, its fullest beauty, and its highest results upon the intellectual, social, and moral condition of the people, in the home of the Pontiff. Here we know you cannot do as you like; but yonder there is no impediment. Protestantism is interdicted. His Holiness shrinks from the very touch and sight of the pollution. And what is the fact? Have the Romans the Bible? Do they possess, without reserve, the reading of the Vulgate? Impossible! They cannot read it if they would. It is to the mass of the Romans as though it were not. Thousands upon thousands within sight of the magnificent palaces of the successor of the poor fishermen of Galilee, live and die without knowing that such a thing as the Sacred Scripture exists. I could adduce testimony after testimony as to this from men who have made the enquiry in the Eternal City. From all travellers who direct attention to this subject, it is uniform and full. Take the following:—

“I had heard that it was impossible to procure a copy of the Holy Scriptures in the Italian tongue in the city of Rome,—so that I wished much to ascertain the matter for my own information, and I one day resolved to test this by visiting every bookseller’s establishment in the city of Rome. I went to the book-shop belonging to the Propaganda Fide,—to that patronised by his Holiness the Pope,—to that which was connected with the Collegio Romano, and was patronised by the Jesuits,—to that which was established for the supply of English and other foreigners,—to those which sold old and second-hand books; and in every establishment, without exception, I found that the Holy Scriptures were not for sale. I could not procure a single copy, in the Roman language, and of a portable size, in the whole city of Rome; and when I asked each bookseller the reason of his not having so important a volume, I was answered in every instance, *E proibito*, or *Non è permesso*,—that the volume was prohibited or not permitted to be sold. Martini’s edition was offered me in two places, but it was in 24 vols., and at a cost of 105 francs” (£4.)¹

(1) Seymour’s Jesuits, p. 208. An offer was subsequently made, in reply to the remark on the poverty of the Romans, to place at the disposal of the Professor,

"There is not a copy of the New Testament, in the Italian language, to be purchased in all Rome, or, indeed, in all Italy. Over and over I have sought for it, but never could find it for sale. The copies of the Scriptures in the Italian, to be met with rarely in private houses, have been printed in England."¹

I cannot close this part without expressing my conviction, which all that I have recorded above would more than warrant, founded upon some enquiry and examination, that at no time, and in no circumstances, does the Church of Rome encourage the reading of the Bible. It permits it, as a necessity from which it cannot well escape; but it never encourages its sale or reading. Everything about your ritual warrants this. Your whole service is based upon it. Upon the Continent I have entered a Romish church whenever I had the opportunity. I have done so many times. I have done so at every kind of service. I have done so to see and know it for myself; and in securing this I have carefully looked out for the Bible; but in no case have I ever seen one. The same singular want is observable in all your teaching. Neither from the pulpit nor the press do you hear a word urging even the claims of the Vulgate, with all the concentrated wisdom of the Church embalmed in notes, upon the people.² I have read your devotional works for myself, and my solemn conviction is, that in no case is the Bible ever pressed upon the attention of the reader.³ I mean works of the same class as "The Devout Life," by St. Francis de Sales. In this the saint writes as though the Bible were to all minds a sealed book.

I have said that your Church permits you to read the Bible,—but when? When! Only when a certificate

copies for gratuitous circulation, but the offer was very politely declined on the plea of ignorance. P. 210.

(1) Whiteside's Italy, ii. p. 216.

(2) "In the seventeenth century, for example, nine hundred and forty editions of the Scriptures in the languages of modern Europe are enumerated; but not one was printed at Rome, or in the temporal dominions of the Pope."—Bible of every Tongue, p. 134.

(3) There is one exception, and I cheerfully record it. Count Stolberg, in his little book on the "Love of God," says,—"Very beautifully doth holy Ambrose speak. It is as if God walked in the Holy Scriptures,—as if he were present in them. And when the sinner reads them, then he heareth the voice of God."—Translation by John Dalton, p. 4.

of character can be obtained "from the parish priest," and then permission in writing may be obtained for the work. But what is the Bible she permits you to use? The question deserves your serious attention. The Vulgate is the highest authority in your Church. The last Holy Council not only rejected the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures as a standard of appeal, but invested with the highest authority the Vulgate translation with all its admitted defects. It shut out all emendation. It closed the door to all enquiry. Even the very autographs of the apostles, should they be forthcoming, must be condemned by you. But what is this Vulgate? A moment's attention may not be mis-spent upon the enquiry. It is by no means certain by whom and when the Bible was translated into the Latin tongue. At an early period various versions existed. Amongst these the *Italic* was preferred by many. About 384, Jerome executed another, professedly from the Hebrew and Greek text. His competence for the task was not of the highest order. Though far excelling most of his contemporaries in sacred literature, yet he confesses himself only partially acquainted with the former. And then, his haste was excessive. In three days he finished his translation of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song.¹ Between this and the sitting of the Council, many editions were issued.²

Let it be remembered that it was in 1545 the Holy Fathers, then invested with supreme authority, declared the Vulgate to be notoriously inaccurate; in 1590, Sextus V., after great care, counsel, and aid from the cardinals, and many learned men, published a new edition, which he declared to be authentic, and sanctioned it "*Apostolicæ potestatis plenitudine.*" The greater excommunication was pronounced upon any one who should alter it. Five years after this, Clement, knowing, doubtless, the value of these denunciations, discovered no less than two thousand errors in this infallible edition, and issued another infallible one.³

(1) Christian Review, 1853. Art. Vulgate.

(2) Horne's Intro. ii. pp. 196—202.

(3) Fulke's Notes on the Rhemish Version.

From this, and not from the originals, every translation authorised by the Church is made. . From this, in 1582, the English version of the New Testament was published at Rheims; and in 1609, the Old Testament, at Douay. These very defective translations, executed only from a translation, form the English Bible in use amongst you.¹

We have already seen with what fences the Church guards this singular volume. Tenderness the most intense, solicitude the most wakeful, for your highest interests prompt her. It is, we are told by the notorious J. K. L., an Irish bishop, because she wishes to turn the flock away, "even from the flowery lawn, at a season when the poisonous herbs grow together with the sweetest herbage." Does it not strike you, Sir, that the reasoning of your Church is singular, and if pushed to its full extent, would be fearfully destructive to yourselves? Let us grant, for example, as Milner and Doyle assert, that the Bible is a dangerous book, and liable to be abused; but does this justify their guilty conduct in withholding it from the people? Is everything to be withheld which is dangerous? Are all things to be relinquished which some men abuse? Shall I shut my eyes to the pure light because some have abused it to perpetrate fearful crimes? If these men would be consistent, I could understand their professions, and appreciate their motives. The great volume of nature is daily unfolded before us. It is a book of God, teaching great verities about his imperial majesty and government. Men have looked upon the heavens, they have gazed with mysterious feelings upon the countless orbs which wander in that measureless expanse, and they have worshipped them as gods, instead of Him whose eternal power and godhead they everywhere proclaim. Should Romanists not seal every page which science is now opening, or not allow the mystic characters upon our rocks to be interpreted, or the wonderful revelations of chemistry and astronomy to be taught, but under the authority of the Church, and with

(1) Grier's Answer to Ward's Errata, pp. 24—29. Some examples may be seen in Horne, ii. As Romanists are still circulating Ward's really dishonourable book, we should be glad to see a cheap and accurate edition of Grier published.

notes from the cardinals and bishops? Why not, Sir? there is danger, danger to the church and the souls of men, from their readings and sceptical conclusions. Some men more or less strongly suspect, and the writer firmly believes, that all this care arises from the conviction that Popery has no standing ground in the sacred volume, and that, therefore, its very existence demands that its reading must be interdicted.

How differently were the inspired oracles treated under the old dispensation. Again and again we find the Divine Majesty himself commanding the law to be read in their hearing, and to be publicly inscribed upon pillars, that the people might read it (Deut. xxvii. 2 ; xxxi. 9 ;— Nehemiah viii. 1). The Saviour appeals to the people in his discourses, as conversant with the law and the prophets, and commands them to search the Scriptures, as containing eternal life, and bearing ample testimony to himself. Subsequently we find his inspired servants recognising the same truth, and in one place giving, in opposition to your Fathers, and the Milners and Doyles of modern times, the broadest and fullest testimony to the value and importance of these sacred records. Let me quote the passage, for fear you may not have seen it. *“And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God”* (the christian) *“may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*¹

If we turn to the New Testament, the evidence against you is still more overwhelming. Luke writes his gospel to correct the mistakes into which some, at this early period, had fallen from your dogma tradition, and to supply Theophilus with an accurate history. Many of the epistles are addressed to the saints and faithful brethren—not to bishops or priests. Some of the remainder are to single individuals, and one even to a lady. Again and

again, these epistles, on the highest authority, are commanded to be read to all the brethren, and letters to one church are to be read to another. The apostles commend the practice of testing their own doctrine by Holy Scripture, and praise those who did it. They urge acquaintance with divine truth, and enforce this by reminding their hearers that it will be the standard by which their conduct will be tried in the final judgment; and the last writer of the sacred canon pronounces a blessing upon him that readeth and heareth, confessedly, the most obscure, and, therefore, difficult part, in the whole New Testament.

Now, without multiplying these testimonies, let me ask you, what man can have authority to interdict my reading a letter, which by the Holy Ghost has been addressed to me? Upon what rational principle will you concede my right to hear read the Holy Book, and yet deny my right to read it for myself? Can the voice of a priest render that innocent, which, if read by myself, would be full of poison? Would you submit to such reasoning, or be governed by such principles, in the commonest affairs of life? In my father's will, or in my friend's letter, I might find a sentence or two not sufficiently clear, or the exact meaning of which I did not satisfactorily understand; I seek for aid in the former from my attorney, or in the latter from a friend in whose judgment I may confide; but, in doing this, do I ever relinquish my right to read and judge for myself? It is just so with the New Testament. It is Christ's last will to his family. For their guidance in all matters relating to his family, he left it. They may listen to its exposition by his ministers; they may consult and advise with one another upon single parts, or upon the whole; but they cannot go beyond this without treason; and, in doing this, they sacrifice no right, but exercise it to the fullest extent, to read and judge of the meaning of the Holy Scriptures for themselves.

Allow me to remind you, moreover, that I think there were obvious causes why the Fathers at Trent usurped

such authority over the minds and consciences of the people. They were doubtless the *élite* of the Roman Church. They were wise in their generation, and would not therefore take a step which places them in antagonism with the practice of the church in all ages, but from some crushing necessity. They saw that the Church was in danger. That danger came from one point, and they were shut up to one means of correcting it. Luther had arisen. His appeals had shaken the Vatican to its foundation. He had thrown Councils and Fathers, Popes and Decretals, to the winds. He had appealed to the Source of light and truth, and challenged his antagonists to meet him on the field of Scripture. He had done more than this. He had enabled the people to do the same. Into the language of his father land he had translated the sacred oracles. The shock was terrific. The mighty throes of Etna or Vesuvius produce no consternation more terrible to nations than this did in the Church of Rome. Nothing could stand before it. It would have crushed the whole Church to atoms, and scattered those unclean spirits which had so long lodged and rioted in its darknesses. There was no hope but in breaking the weapon. I repeat, it was a wise decision. They had no alternative. Only interdicting it, and filling the minds of their ignorant followers with apprehension of the dangerous tendency of God's word, could sustain their despotism, and save the Church. Let me add, that in the light of Scripture the mass of your popular religious works would be repudiated by the people; the gross perversions of its facts, the additions made to it from other sources to maintain the idolatry of saints, &c., as in "the glories of Joseph," for instance, would be rejected with scorn.

I have said this decision of the Tridentine Fathers placed them in the boldest antagonism with the practices of the church for ages, and now proclaimed the priesthood, therefore, as usurpers of the rights and liberties of the church of Christ. I could fill page after page upon this subject; though I say with Augustine,—

"I ought not to adduce the Council of Nice, nor ought you to

adduce the Council of Ariminum: for I am not bound by the authority of the one, nor are you bound by the authority of the other. Let the question be determined by the authority of the Scriptures, which are witnesses peculiar to neither of us, but common to both."¹

In quoting this I am only using a favourite weapon of your own. With the authority of the Fathers you are more than imposed upon; and well would it be for you, and for the interests of our common humanity, if, instead of this, your teachers would give us the authority of Christ. No one, conversant with the early condition of the church, can doubt the truth of what Chrysostom says:—

"Behold, how the women and little children hang the gospels, as a sure defence, around their necks, and carry them whithersoever they go. Do thou engrave the doctrines and laws of the gospel upon thy mind. Thou needest neither gold nor silver, nor to buy a book: thou requirest only thine own free will, and the desire of an awakened soul, and thou shalt possess the gospel more securely, though thou bear it not outwardly about thy person, having deposited its sacred precepts in thy inmost soul."²

In the same manner, the Abbe Fleury, embodying the facts of true history, says:—

"The faithful studied the Word of God in private, every one by himself, meditating upon it both day and night. They used to read over again in their houses what they had heard read at the church, to fix in their memories the expositions of the pastor, and to discourse them over among themselves. Above all, the fathers of families took care to make these repetitions to their domestics. For every master of a family was, within the walls of his own house, as it were, a private pastor, keeping up therein a regular course of praying and reading; instructing his wife, children, and servants, &c." "What I have said of fathers is also to be understood of mothers, who took the same religious care of their children." "There were even many lay christians who had the Holy Scripture by heart: so constantly were they in reading it. They generally carried a bible about them, making it their companion wherever they went. . . . St. Chrysostom tells us that in his time, many women wore it hanging at their necks: that they washed their hands when they received those holy books, &c."³

(1) Con. Max., 3, c. xiv. Seymour's Mornings with the Jesuits, p. 122.

(2) Hom. in Pope Antioch. xix. Neander Chrysost. i. p. 252. From the same source we learn that women frequently hung the gospels around their necks, and the necks of their children. Others were accustomed to suspend them near their beds, as a species of charm.—*Ibid.*

(3) Manners of the Christians, pp. 51—53.

Such, and much more to this effect, is affirmed by this distinguished Frenchman.

Clement says,—

“We rely not on men, who merely give us their opinions, over against which, we, in like manner, may set our own. But if it is not enough merely to give our opinions, if it is necessary to prove what we affirm, we do not wait for the testimony of men, but prove it by the Word of the Lord, which is the most certain of all arguments, or rather the only one,—the form of knowing whereby those who have barely tasted of the Scriptures become believers, and those who have made greater progress, and become accurately acquainted with the truth, are Gnostics.”¹

I need not remind you, that few men filled a wider circle in the church's history than Cyprian. In addition to his many works, he wrote one called, “Testimonies against the Jews.” It was addressed to a friend, and is full of Scriptures.

“These things while you read them will meanwhile be profitable, in fixing the just outlines of your faith; more strength will be given you; the wisdom of the heart will be exercised more and more, as you more fully examine into the Scriptures, Old and New, and pursue the entire extent of those spiritual books. As yet we have but drawn scantily from the divine fountains for your present supply; you will be enabled to drink more largely, and be satisfied more bountifully, if, with us, you yourself approach to drink at those same fountains of divine fulness.”²

“The gospel precepts, most dear brethren, are none other than directions from God: foundations whereon hope is built up; stays whereby faith is established; nurture for the heart's comforting; rudders to direct us in our way; and safeguards for the obtaining of salvation; which the docile minds of believers upon earth do guide them to the heavenly kingdom. Many things, indeed, God willed should be said and made known by his servants the prophets; but how far greater are those which the Son speaks, which the Word of God, who was in the prophets, testifies with his own voice, no longer charging that the way should be prepared for him to come, but himself coming, and opening, and showing us the way; that we who before were wandering in the shadows of death, unknowing and blind, might, illuminated by the light of grace, keep in the way of life, under the Lord for our guide and ruler.”³

(1) *Stromata*, vii. p. 757. Also, *Eclectic Review*, Aug. 1854.

(2) Father Newman. *Lib. of the Fathers*, iii. p. 22.

(3) *Ibid*, Tract vii. p. 177. Also, Tract vii. p. 176. Cyprian ever appeals to the Sacred Volume, and sustains all his propositions by largely quoting from it. Evidently he knew no other authority.

Cyril addressed a series of lectures to Catechumens, to instruct them in the faith, previous to their Baptism. He says:—

“If any one is anxious to know why the gift is given through water, and not through some other element, let him take up Holy Scripture, and he shall learn.”

“For, concerning the divine and sacred mysteries of the faith, we ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures, nor be drawn aside by mere probabilities, and the artifices of argument. Do not, then, believe me, because I tell you these things, unless thou receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth; for this salvation, which is of our faith, is not by ingenious reasonings, but by proof of the Holy Scriptures.”

“Now, heed not any ingenious views of mine, else thou mayest be misled; but unless thou receive the witness of the prophets concerning each matter, believe not what is spoken; unless thou learn from the Holy Scriptures concerning the virgin, and the place, and the time, and the manner, receive not witness from men.”

“While from the frequent reading of the Holy Scriptures, you, who are diligent, come to understand these things; and by this time hold more steadfastly.”¹

Chrysostom might supply us with page after page. Upon the young and the old, rich and poor, parents and children, he urges the claims of Holy Scripture. I select one or two passages, and refer in the Notes to others.

“The reading of the Sacred Scriptures snatcheth the soul from out of all these evil thoughts as it were from the midst of the fire. Wherefore, that great prophet David, knowing the good which cometh of reading the Scriptures, likens the man who hath a constant intercourse with them, unto an evergreen tree, which groweth beside a stream, saying, ‘Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.’ . . . In like manner will the soul, dwelling beside the stream of Sacred Writ, constantly drinking its waters, and imbibing the dew of the Holy Spirit, be unsubdued by any change of fortune; and though disease, though insult, though calumnies, though revilings, though scorn, though every mockery, though all the evils of the world, assailed such a soul, it will easily endure the fiery ordeal of calamity through the abundant consolation of the Scriptures. Not the greatness of earthly glory, not the height of power, not the presence of friends, none of human means, can afford consolation to the afflicted, like that of reading the Holy Scriptures.” . . . “Let us, then, heed the reading of the Holy Scriptures, not only during these two hours, but constantly; for the mere listening here will not be sufficient

(1) Lect. iii. p. 27. Lect. iv. p. 42. Lect. xii. p. 125. Lect. xvii. p. 237. Other examples may be seen in Lects. iv. pp. 48, 50, 51; xlii. p. 146. Cyril constantly recognises the supreme authority of Holy Scripture.—Newman. Lib. of the Fathers.

to secure the salvation of our souls. Let each man, when he returneth home, take the Bible in his hand, and if he desire to derive a full and enduring advantage from the Holy Scriptures, let him ponder, then, on the things spoken in the church." . . . "Thus he, who continually readeth the Bible, although no man be near to expound it, receiveth thereby unto his soul abundant nourishment from that sacred fountain."

"Admit no other teacher. Thou hast the Word of God, and none can be to thee so good an instructor. Man often concealeth things through vain glory and envy. Hear, I beseech you, all ye who live for this world, and procure Bibles as medicine for your souls. Purchase at least the New Testament, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Apostolical Epistles, and let them be your constant guide. If grief come upon thee, look therein, as a repository of medicine; thence take consolation in all misfortunes; in the hour of death, and under the loss of friends; or, rather, look not therein, but carry about with thee its contents in thy heart. An ignorance of the Scriptures is the cause of all evils. Not to know the Scriptures, is to go to war without arms."¹

"I hear no one boast that he hath a knowledge of the Scriptures, but that he owneth a Bible written in golden characters. And tell me, then, what profiteth this? The Holy Scriptures were not given to us that we should enclose them in books, but that we should engrave them upon our hearts; for it were a Jewish conceit to suppose that any good can come from the mere possession of the commandments of God written in a book. To us, from the first, the law was not thus given, but was inscribed upon the 'fleshy tables of the heart.'"²

"How shall ye ever be able to understand the things contained in the Scriptures, when ye will not so much as slightly look into them? Take the Bible in your hands, read the whole story, and, bearing in mind the things which are clear, peruse again and again those which are dark and difficult; and if, after frequent reading, ye find not the sense of the passage, go to a brother more learned than yourselves; seek the teacher, and talk of it with him; show an earnest desire for knowledge; and if God perceive in you such great zeal, he will not slight your watchfulness and care; and should no man open to you that which you seek, God himself will surely reveal it to you."³

Athanasius, referring to the Canon of Scripture, in one of his Festal Letters, says,—

"These are the fountains of salvation which satisfy those who are athirst with the words of life which are in them, in which alone is

(1) Hom. on Col. ix. Neander's *Life of Chrysostom*, i., pp. 260, 261.

(2) Hom. on John xxxii. *Ibid.*, i., pp. 253, 258. In this valuable work the reader will find abundant testimony of the constant use of Scripture. The orator is ever urging it upon the attention of his hearers: for example, pp. 104, 144, 216, 223, 234, 249, 254, 255, 256, 257, 259. London: 1845.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 258.

preached the doctrine of godliness. Let not a man add to these, neither let him take from them. For our Lord, when he preached to the Sadducees, said, 'Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.' He also reprov'd the Jews, saying, 'Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me.'"¹

"Laying aside," says the same Father, "all such arguments, let them prove their church if they can, not in the discourses or reports of Africans, nor in the councils of their bishops, nor in the writings of any controversialists whatever, nor by wonders and miracles, which are liable to deceit, and against which we have been forewarned and cautioned by the words of our Lord. But let them prove it in the law, in the predictions of the prophets, in the songs of the psalmists, in the words of the Shepherd himself, in the preaching and labours of the evangelists, that is, in all the canonical authorities of the Sacred volume."²

I will only add one other, Hippolytus:—

"For in like manner as he who wishes to learn the wisdom of this world cannot accomplish it without studying the doctrine of the philosophers; so all those who wish to practise divine wisdom will not learn it from any other than from the Word of God. Let us, therefore, see what the Holy Scriptures pronounce; let us understand what they teach; and let us believe as the Father wishes to be believed, and praise the Son as he wishes to be praised, and accept the Holy Spirit as he wishes to be given. Not according to our own will, nor according to our own reason, nor forcing what God has given; but let us see all this as he has willed to show it by the Holy Scriptures."³

In the Anglo-Saxon Church, few men attracted more attention than Bede, and his pupil, Alcuin, the friend of Charlemagne. Alcuin thus writes:—

"Would we be with God? let us pray and read: in the former of these exercises we converse with our heavenly Father; in the latter he converses with us. Would we sufficiently feed our souls? the Bible must supply us with means; it is no less needful for such an end, than earthly viands are for corporeal nutriment. Would we travel securely through the world? Holy Writ must shed its light along our course."⁴

Need I say that long before the era of modern Popery,

(1) British Quarterly Review, August, 1852, p. 96.

(2) De Unitate, c. 16. Seymour's Jesuits, &c., p. 123.

(3) See Bunsen, i., p. 144. Gregory Nazienzen was accustomed to read the Holy Scriptures from his youth. His father was a bishop, and died when his son was only a boy.—Ullman's Life, by Cox, p. 23. Basil also recommends the reading of the Scriptures for the highest purposes.—*Ibid*, p. 58.

(4) Soame's Bampton Lectures, p. 72. A more striking illustration, but too long for my purpose, may be found in Whelock's Bede, and in the Note of the above writer, pp. 92, 93.

when, to sustain her usurpations, and to quench your liberty, she interdicted the free use of the Scriptures, they were in wide and general circulation? Copying them engaged the time of multitudes. The Italic, the Syriac, Ætheopic, the Coptic, the Sahadic, the Arabic, and Armenian versions were executed in very early times, and for the use of the people. They had no notes; they were free from the Church comments. The circulation of the Sacred Scriptures then excited no fear. Truth was more valued than the worldly power of a hierarchy, and the simple teachers of Christ's Holy Gospel had nothing to dread from placing his truths in the hands of his children. Chrysostom says,—“*By the translation of the Scriptures into the native language of the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Indians, the Persians, and Ethiopians, who were formerly barbarians, the world had learned the true art of philosophising.*”¹ Beyond all dispute, the fact is manifest, that those nations who have unsealed the sacred fountain, who have based their national and social polity on the great principles of God's word, who have given the freest access to its pages, and permitted it to become the household book of the people, have risen in all that is noble and distinguished, in their national, their moral, and social condition, compared to those people who have it not. The States of the Church, the gem of Romanism, the clearest, the best, the fullest development of all it can do for humanity, might make a Turk blush. Unfetter the Bible; without note or comment let it circulate amongst you; it would enfranchise you from spiritual despotism; it would elevate your conception of the Divine Majesty, and his claims upon the intelligent homage of his creatures; it would sanctify your nature, and surround you with a tide of secondary and subsidiary influences which would elevate you morally, socially, and politically, and, above all, would open to you a pathway to immortality and eternal life. Surely there is nothing to fear from the Word of the living God. Truth has nothing to fear. The true church of God has nothing to fear from that

(1) Eclectic Review, May, 1854.

book which alone discloses its nature and its glorious mission. With the Chevalier Bunsen, we may say,—

“ Either Christianity is true, or it is not true ; the Scriptures either contain the Word of God to mankind, or they do not contain it ; Christ either spoke the truth, or he did not speak it. Now, if Christianity is not true, what authority in the world can make it true ? But if it be true, it is true because true in itself, and wants no authority whatever to make it true.”¹

No, it rests solely, entirely, immutably, upon the Divine Word ; and it is only in proportion as we understand that, realise its hallowing and transforming influence, imbibe the spirit which it breathes, and are regulated in all the relationships of life by its precepts, that we shall know the Christianity of the New Testament in all its fulness and power, and manifest to the world that we are the disciples of Jesus, by doing what he has commanded us : “ Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.”

(1) Bunsen's Hippolytus and his Age.

LETTER II.

THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE.

Few things are more adapted to arrest the attention of an intelligent mind than the contrast between the poor fishermen of Galilee, and the monarch-priest of the city upon the seven hills. The opposition is so bold, the resemblance so distant, the toil, labour, suffering, and poverty of the one, is so unlike the ease, the worldly grandeur, and high and haughty pretension of the other, that one is certainly struck with the amazing condescension of his Holiness in recognising the relationship, and still more in proclaiming it to the world. Men would have been less startled, incredulity itself would have been less abashed, had he avowed himself the successor of the Pontifex Maximus of ancient Rome, and signed his imperial decrees with the signet of the College of Augurs, rather than that of the fishermen. The fiction is ingenious, and has been immensely profitable.

Nor is it, upon the whole, wonderful. A thousand causes combined for its production, and others lend their influence to prolong the delusion. History has its tricks, and men are willing to be deceived. Multitudes confound the present with the past. Lordly Pontiffs of modern times are identified with the humble but devoted ministers of the primitive age. The shadow is mistaken for the reality. The magic of a name is felt, and men more or less are blinded by its power. No doubt many of the early ministers of Christ were poor and working men, who travelled from place to place to preach the Gospel, yet ministering to their own necessities,—men of zeal and intense devotion, whose absorbing object was to win souls to Christ. Equally true is it, that this was the case with

the first pastors of the city churches, if not all.¹ So it was with their first places of worship. No splendid structures were reared. They met in the market-place, in private houses, and, when persecution was more fierce, in crypts, and, indeed, in any place where they could worship God.² Paul, one of the boasted founders of the Roman church, so unlike a modern bishop, dwelt for two whole years in his own hired house, and preached to all who resorted to him.³ But look at these simple facts through the medium of your ecclesiastical writers. These almost houseless wanderers are mitred prelates; the upper room, or sometimes garret, in which the mysteries of heaven were unfolded, is the mother church, the cathedral of Peter or John; the meeting of the members of such a church to deliberate upon points of faith or questions of discipline, is the first council; and the seat of this primitive godly man, becomes now the throne of my lord; and thus the whole simplicity of the purest ages of the church of Christ is converted, by a sort of spiritual legerdemain, into all the appalling magnificence of modern priestcraft, alike repugnant to the dictates of reason and the law of God. In fact, no two things in this world are so opposed, so unlike each other, as a modern Pope and bishop Paul or Peter; and no man, free from delusion, can easily confound the one with the other.

Upon the threshold of this enquiry I feel a difficulty. You boast of your unity, and, with no small degree of satisfaction, twit Protestants with their divisions; but upon this important and fundamental doctrine of your Church there is the wildest confusion. What is acknowledged in one country is repudiated in another. Bellarmine and Wiseman differ widely.⁴ Italy is opposed to Gaul, and the dwellers on this side the Alps reject with scorn the

(1) Fleury's *Manners of the Christians*, p. 153. (2) *Ibid*, p. 81.

(3) The tradition is that the successor of Mark, the founder and first patriarch of the church at Alexandria, was a cobbler. Basnage has given us the particulars, *Hist. Eccle.*, tome 1. Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches* will supply the reader with much information on these matters.

(4) See Wiseman's *Lectures*, viii., pp. 264—5. Butler's *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, p. 119. Count de Maistre du Pape.

fulsome and blasphemous eulogies of those who bask in the luxuriousness of the Papal court. The difference is wide and vital. His Grace of Norfolk uttered an annoying truth to your community, when he affirmed that the claims of the Pontiff and his satellites were incompatible with allegiance to the British Sovereign.¹ Upon this splendid fiction I shall touch in my present letter. I will try to place it distinctly before you, and then analyse the evidence upon which it rests.

In the year 1439, a Council at Florence, after devoting "to hell and damnation the members of the Council of Basil," and widening the breach between the Latin and Greek churches,² pronounced the following decree:—

"We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff have the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of St. Peter, the chief of the apostles, and the true vicar of Christ; and that he is the head of the whole Church, and the father and teacher of all christians; and that to him in St. Peter was delegated, by our Lord Jesus Christ, full power to feed, rule, and govern the universal church; as also is contained in the acts of general councils, and in the holy canons."³

The Catechism compiled by authority of the Holy Fathers at Trent, thus pronounces upon this dogma,—

"Sitting in the chair in which Peter, the prince of the apostles, sat to the close of life, the Catholic church recognises in his person the most exalted degree of dignity, and the full amplitude of jurisdiction—a dignity and a jurisdiction not based on synodal, or other human constitutions, but emanating from God himself. As the successor of Peter, and the true and legitimate vicar of Christ, he therefore presides over the universal church, the father and governor of all the faithful; of bishops also, and of all other prelates, be their station, rank, or power what they may."

Lofty as these pretensions are, we shall find that individuals, members of the highest rank in your community,

(1) Letter to Lord Beaumont.

(2) Mosheim, vol. iii., p. 424.

(3) Cramp's Text Book, p. 296. It may amuse the reader to find how these Romish bishops, all under the guidance, they say, of the Holy Ghost, treated one another. The Council of Basil, condemned by the Council of Florence, passed the following decree against the Pope Eugenius:—"He was notoriously and manifestly contumacious, disobedient to the universal church, a rebel, a violator and despiser of the canons, a disturber of unity, simoniacal, perjured, heretical, incorrigible, schismatical, departed from the faith, and an obstinate heretic, the dilapidator of the goods of the Church, useless and damnable, unworthy of any title, rank, honour, or dignity, and, therefore, deprived of the Papacy," &c. Nicholas V. confirmed this decree.—Spanheim's Annals, p. 494.

in expounding these dogmas, clothe his Holiness with still greater power. He is *"Our Lord God the Pope; another God upon earth; King of kings, and Lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and the Pope. To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree as he decreed, were a matter of heresy. The power of the Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more than God."*¹

Cardinal Bellarmine says,—

"The Pope cannot, as Pope, ordinarily depose temporal princes, although just reason exists, in the same manner in which he deposes bishops, that is, as an ordinary judge; yet he may change kingdoms, and take away one, and bestow upon another, as supreme spiritual prince, if the same should be necessary to the salvation of souls."

"The Pope may and ought to compel all christians to serve God in that manner which their station requires of them. But kings are bound to serve God by defending the Church and punishing heretics and schismatics. Therefore, the Pope may and ought to enjoin kings to do this, and if they neglect to compel them, by excommunication and other suitable matters."²

Other examples may be selected.

"There is," says Boniface VIII., "one fold and one Shepherd. The authority of that Shepherd includes two swords,—the spiritual and the temporal. So much are we taught by the words of the evangelist, 'Behold, here are two swords,' namely, in the Church. The Lord did not reply, It is too much, but, It is enough. Certainly he did not deny to Peter the temporal sword: he only commanded him to return it into its scabbard. Both, therefore, belong to the jurisdiction of the Church,—the spiritual sword and the secular. The one is to be wielded for the Church,—the other by the Church; the one is the sword of the priest,—the other in the hand of the monarch, but at the command and sufferance of the priest. It behoves the one sword to be under the other,—the temporal authority to be subject to the spiritual power."

"We declare, say, define, and pronounce it to be necessary to salvation," says Boniface VIII., "that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff. The one sword must be under the other; and the temporal authority must be subject to the spiritual power: hence, if the earthly power go astray, the spiritual shall judge it."³

(1) Bp. Newton's Proph., ii., p. 399, Apud Jewel's Defence. Barrow's Supremacy.

(2) Cramp, p. 300.

(3) Quoted by Wylie, who gives the authorities, pp. 98—100. Baronius teaches similar doctrines:—"There can be no doubt of it, but that this civil principality is subject to the sacerdotal, and that God hath made the political government subject to the dominion of the spiritual church."—Ann., pp. 57, 23.

Beyond this, if possible, your Canon Law goes. The power it attributes to the Pope is unlimited. All other authorities are insignificant and subordinate. It invests him with absolute power over all monarchs, and all authority and law are under his control. "*The tribunals of kings are subjected to the power of the priests.*" "*The temporal power can neither loose nor bind the Pope.*" "*The Bishop of Rome may be judged of none but of God only.*"¹

"The Bishop of Rome may excommunicate emperors and princes, depose them from their states, and assail their subjects from their oath of obedience to them."²

"If the Pope should become neglectful of his own salvation, and that of other men, and so lost to all good, that he draw down with himself innumerable people by heaps into hell, and plunge them, with himself, into eternal torments, yet no mortal man may presume to reprehend him, forasmuch as he is judge of all, and is judged of no one."³

"The Bishop of Rome has power to absolve from allegiance, obligation, bond of service, promise, and compact, the provinces, cities, and armies of kings, that rebel against him, and also to loose their vassals and feudatories."⁴

"An oath sworn against the good of the church doth not bind, because that is not an oath, but a perjury rather, which is taken against the Church's interests."⁵

"It is not lawful for a layman to impose taxes or subsidies upon the clergy. If laics encroach upon cleric immunities, they are, after admonition, to be excommunicated. But in time of great necessity, the clergy may grant assistance to the state, with permission of the Bishop of Rome."⁶

I will only add one other extract, from M'Caul on the Canon Law, as illustrative of the monstrous pretensions of his Holiness:—

"It must be confessed, notwithstanding, that the Pope, as vicar of Christ on earth, and universal pastor of his sheep, has indirectly (or in respect of the spiritual power granted to him by God, in order to the good government of the whole Church) a certain supreme power, for the good estate of the Church, if it be necessary, *of judging and disposing of all the temporal goods of all christians.*"

(1) Cramp, p. 300.

(2) Decreti, part i., &c. (3) Decreti, part i., dis. 4, Can. vi.

(4) Clementii, Lib. ii., lit. 1, c. 2.

(5) Decret. Gregorii, Lib. ii., lit. 24, cap. 27.

(6) *Ibid*, Lib. iv., lit. 49, c. iv. and vii. See Wylie's Papacy, 134—5, where many more will be found, and the authorities given.

Not only is this affirmed in your dogmas, and asserted again and again, in the most absolute terms, by many of your writers,¹ but nations have been shaken to their bases by its audacious exercise by many Pontiffs. The thunder of the Vatican has rolled, and imperial rebels have trembled. At the nod of his Holiness, monarchs have been prostrated. Gregory VII. pronounced the sentence of excommunication upon the Emperor Henry IV., deposed him from his throne, absolved his subjects from their allegiance, and subsequently kept the humbled monarch, in all but a state of nudity, waiting four days at the gate of his palace, for admission to the haughty tyrant. The same Pontiff offered Sueno, of Denmark, a rich province, occupied by heretics, for his son to seize and possess. "As if," says Fleury, "the heresy of the conquered gave a lawful title to the conqueror."² Sixtus V. thundered his anathemas against Henry of Navarre, and laid his kingdom under an interdict.³ Innocent III. decreed the severest punishment against the Count of Thoulouse, excommunicated him, absolved his subjects from their oath of fidelity, and permitted any Catholic to attack his person, and seize his lands.⁴ Our own country has felt the effects of this terrible usurpation. Ireland may trace her deep and long-seated misery to this cause. Long had the church in that country resisted the blandishments of Rome, and maintained a purer faith, and more scriptural worship. Adrian III., for the good of their souls, and the advancement of the Church, consigned their country and their bodies to the sword of the Norman Henry.⁵ Even our maiden Queen staggered

(1) Examples of this may be seen in Ranke's History of the Popes, pp. 176—7. Cramp, p. 300. Elliot, Book iii., chap. iv.

(2) Fleury's Dissertation, translated by Jortin. R. E. Hist., iii., p. 293.

(3) "Immediately on becoming Pope," says a cotemporary, "he sought God's aid, and then deprived that vile heretic king of the kingdom of Navarre; and with these spiritual arms principally the Popes have unmade and made emperors and kings."—Ranke's Append., p. 410.

(4) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., p. 291. A longer and more interesting account of this, and the persecutions of his Albigenian subjects, will be found in Sismondi's History, chap. i.

(5) See Theiry's Norman Conq., vol. i., p. 82; vol. ii., p. 13, where the bull is recorded. In support of the independence of the Irish church, the reader will find abundant proof in Usher's Religion of the Irish and British.

under the blow aimed at her, by the then wounded pontiff, Pius V., when he hurled his bull of excommunication at her.¹ In a word, there is scarcely any country under heaven, where the influence of Popery has extended, but what has felt its power.

All history, for centuries, shows us that these attributes, claimed by the supreme Pontiff, were not a theory, but a practical matter, exercised, as we have seen, for the good of the Church, but in reality only to gratify the boundless ambition of some monk, who had more delight in placing his proud foot upon a monarch's neck than in seeking the enlargement of the empire of holiness, and who had been raised to his lordly pre-eminence by the most disreputable means. War, treason, rebellion, murder, have been the fearful agencies by which this authority has been maintained over the kings of the earth.

But, Sir, all these lofty pretensions, spiritual and temporal, are based upon usurpation, sustained by the grossest and most shameless frauds, and are without the shadow of support from the sober facts of impartial history. The whole proceedings of the Court of Rome, in the acquisition of these monstrous powers, and in exercising them, proclaim the entire abandonment of truth and righteousness. The partisans of the Papacy knew how to wield the weapons of falsehood and imposition, far more effectually than those of truth and holiness.²

I know not a more fitting opportunity for touching upon the moral character of the Popes. It will more than confirm the opinion I have just expressed, and place the enormous wickedness of the whole system before you in such a light as to render it morally impossible for an intelligent man to identify it with the purity and spirituality of the religion of Christ. There may have been exceptions, but they have been "like angels' visits, few and far between."

(1) Lingard's History, v., chap. v. This bull may be seen in the Protestant, i., pp. 159—60.

(2) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., p. 255, &c. The whole discourse is full of truth, and worth attention.

"Except in the annals of Eastern despotism," says Sir James Stephen, "no parallel can be found in the disasters of the Papacy during the century and a half which followed the extinction of the Carolingian dynasty. Of the twenty-four Popes who during that period ascended the apostolic throne, two were murdered, five were driven into exile, four were deposed, and three resigned their hazardous dignity. Some of these Vicars of Christ were raised to that awful pre-eminence by arms, and some by money. Two received it from the hands of princely courtesans. One was self-appointed. A well-filled purse purchased one papal abdication; the promise of a fair bride another. One of the holy fathers pillaged the treasury, and fled with the spoil; returned to Rome, rejected his substitute, and mutilated him in a manner too revolting for description. . . . Of these heirs of St. Peter, one entered on his infallibility in his eighteenth year, and one before he had seen his twelfth summer. One took to himself a coadjutor, that he might command in person such legions as Rome had sent into the field. Another, Judas like, agreed, for certain pieces of silver, to recognise the Bishop of Constantinople as Universal Bishop, &c."¹

Sir James is a Protestant, and may be partial; take, then, a cardinal. Baronius, speaking of the tenth century, says,—

"Both cardinals, bishops, priests, and secular clergy, emulated the crimes of the Pontiffs; since it is a fixed law of nature for everything to produce that which resembles itself."²

Under the same year he says,—

"The houses of the clergy were schools for harlots and assemblies of stage players, where dice, dancing, and singing were to be witnessed, and where the patrimony of kings, and the alms given by princes, were lavishly squandered."³

"At that time how deformed, how frightful, was the face of the Church of Rome! The holy see was fallen under the tyranny of two loose and disorderly women, who placed and displaced bishops as their humour led them on, and which I tremble to think and speak of. They placed their gallants upon St. Peter's chair, who did not so much as deserve the name of Pope. For who dare say that these infamous persons, who intruded without any form of justice, were lawful Popes? . . . All the canons of councils were infringed, the decrees of Popes trampled under foot, the ancient traditions despised, the customs and ceremonies usually observed in the elections of Popes neglected, and the holy see became a prey to avarice and ambition."⁴

Other specimens may be seen, as given by Murdoch, in his edition of Mosheim.

(1) Edin. Review, April, 1845.

(2) Ann., 912. Taylor, p. 310. (3) *Ibid*, pp. 310—11.

(4) Baronius. See Du Pin's E. Hist., 10th Cent.

Arnulph, Bishop of Orleans, addressing the Council of Rheims, and pointing to the Pontiff, said,—

“Who is that, seated upon a high throne, radiant with purple and gold? I say, who do you take him to be? Verily, if he thus follows uncharitableness, and is puffed up with his own learning, it must be Anti-Christ sitting in the temple of God.”¹

Everard, Bishop of Saltzburg, later, in the Council of Ratisbon, exclaimed,—

“He who is the servant of servants, desires to be lord of lords: he profanes, he pillages, he defrauds, he robs, he murders, and he is the last man who is called Anti-Christ.”

Petrarch, writing from Avignon, says,—

“The sun never shone on a more shameless city than this western Babylon, where I am now dwelling; its river, the proud Rhone, is like the burning Cocytus or Acheron, and here reigns a proud race of fishermen, who are no longer poor. In the name of Jesus, but with the works of Belial, they imprison numbers of unhappy christians, and then, after pillaging them of everything, they condemn them to the flames.”

Petrarch again says,—

“To see the good humbled and the wicked exalted; eagles creeping and asses flying; foxes in gilded coaches, crows on high towers; doves on dunghills, wolves unchained; lambs fettered, Christ forgotten, Anti-Christ supreme, and Beelzebub judge.

“Long had the Pope proclaimed himself to the world
Half man, half God.
Now, by God's blessing, we are enabled to see him
Half man, half Satan.”²

How you can reconcile these things with the religion of Jesus, and blindly recognise in such pollutions and moral debasement the source of all authority in the kingdom of Christ, I am at a loss to know. There is only one principle upon which I can understand it. Paul announces it as the characteristic of Anti-Christ, in 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Many of the titles which are now exclusively appropriated to the Pope, were for ages the common property of all bishops; and some of the prerogatives which he

(1) Rossetti on the anti-Papal Spirit, &c., vol. i., p. 6.

(2) Rossetti, i., pp. 6, 8, 12, 17. “Rome,” says St. Bridget, “was become the whirlpool of hell, the house of mammon, where the devil, the ruler of avarice, sits upon his throne, and sells the patrimony of Christ.”—*Ibid*, p. 21.

exclusively exercises, were originally used by persons not of the ecclesiastical order. The limits of this letter preclude a lengthy detail, but a few facts upon this subject may not be uninteresting to the general reader.

The title of Pope, it is well known, originally applied to all bishops, and again and again they are spoken of as the vicars of Christ. "In the west, the names Papa, Apostolicus, Vicarius Christi, Summus Pontifex, Sedes Apostolica, were applied to other bishops also, and their sees," &c.¹ For centuries their elections were popular; the voice of the people alone decided in this matter, and the authority claimed by his Holiness "as the father and governor of the faithful," was unknown.² Many of them rebuked his insolence when he attempted to interfere, and separated from communion with him more than once.

"In the first ages," says an historian of your own, "the title of Archbishop was unknown; they were called only Bishops of Rome and Alexandria, as well as of the smallest city; and the bishops, in their letters, treated each other as brethren, with a perfect equality, as appears from the inscriptions of the letters of Cyprian. As charity declined, titles and ceremonies increased. The Bishop of Alexandria, as it is supposed, was the first who took the title of Archbishop; the Bishop of Antioch that of Patriarch; and the name of Primate was peculiar to Africa."³ This witness is emphatically true. The records of our faith are silent upon these distinctions. They were borrowed, in the main, from political distinctions, and adopted when the faithful had lost the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus, and when the successors of the apostles were more ambitious to be distinguished by the pomps and vanities of this world, than by the purity of sound doctrine, and a life of separation from the world.⁴

(1) Gieseler's Compend., i., p. 453, Note.

(2) Clement's Eps., § 44. Abp. Wake's Trans.

(3) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., p. 262. Spanheim, p. 261.

(4) See Campbell's Lectures, where the reader will find a graphic sketch of these, and the rise of the Papacy.

Councils, whether universal or provincial—those unscriptural assumptions of spiritual power, and in every age productive of unmixed evil to the church of God,¹ and which cannot now be held without the express authority of the Roman Pontiff—were *originally convened*, without ever consulting the Bishop of Rome; frequently, if not invariably, by the monarch in whose dominions they were held, or by the bishop of the chief see, in concurrence with his brethren.² Constantine convened the first general one at Nice, and presided over its deliberations.³ Gieseler says that Constantine and his successors “*summoned councils, allowing them to consult under the superintendence of their commissioners, and then gave imperial confirmation to their decrees.*”⁴ But when the controversy was not terminated by this means, as usually happened, the emperors were often led by political, often by religious motives, often by court cabals, to step in with new decisions, sometimes taking a middle course, sometimes giving the superiority to the party formerly condemned.”⁵ In addition to this truthful statement of one of the most eminent of modern writers, permit me an extract from one of your own. “In fact, is there the least trace of a permission or consent of the Pope in all the Councils mentioned by Turtullian, Cyprian, and Eusebius, either as to the celebration of Easter, or the readmission of penitents, or the baptism of heretics? Was any mention made of the Pope in the then great Councils of Alexandria, which were convened on the affairs of Arius, before the Nicene Council? Was there any mention of him in the Council of Constantinople, called by the emperor Theo-

(1) Gregory Nazienzen says, “To tell you plainly, I am determined to fly all Conventions of Bishops, for I never saw a Council that ended happily. Instead of lessening, they invariably augment the mischief. The passion for victory, and the lust of power (you’ll perhaps think my freedom intolerable), are not to be described in words,” &c.—Campbell, p. 256.

(2) Spanheim, pp. 297, 339—40.

(3) Eusebius’s E. H., Lib. x., chap. v. Life of Const., Book i., chap. xxxvii. Book iii., chap. vi. See Socrates’s E. Hist., Lib. i., chap. viii.

(4) The Emperor gave full power to the tribune Marcellinus to decide the controversy between the Catholics and the Donatists in 411.

(5) Compend. E. Hist., i., pp. 420—1.

dosius, in 381? And yet pope Damasus, and all that met, consented to its decisions; insomuch, that it is counted the second Œcumenic Council. Not to mention so many national Councils held in France, principally under the kings of the second race, and in Spain under the Gothic kings.”¹ I will only add, that in this country and Ireland their authority was not recognised for centuries.² Readers wishing to investigate this fact, will find ample information in the works below.³

The most imposing title by which his Holiness is distinguished, and from which he exercises all his power, is that of Universal Bishop, “the Father and Governor of all the faithful, of bishops also, and of all other prelates, be their station, rank, or power what they may.” It will probably amuse some of my readers, if not you, if we analyse this beautiful fiction, and show the grounds upon which this imposing claim rests, in the writings of your own friends. The first Bishop of Rome who assumed it was, I believe, Boniface III. It was bestowed upon him by the emperor Phocas, a man who had waded through the blood of his master to the throne, and whose accession had been hailed by Gregory in strains which will cover his character as a patriot and a christian with the deepest infamy.⁴ During the reign of Maurice, this title had been assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople. Gregory was roused. His holy indignation was always ready. It could fiercely denounce the usurpation in the Church, which threatened his own supremacy, and flow in loftiest tones of thanksgiving to God for the exaltation of the murderer of his master. “What wilt thou answer to Christ, the Head of the universal church?” said this

(1) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., p. 256.

(2) In the Conference with Austin, sent by Gregory the Great, the British churches repudiated his authority, and said, “they would not own Augustine as Archbishop over them.”—Bede’s E. H., Book ii., chap. ii.

(3) Bp. Stillingfleet’s *Antiquities of the British Churches*, chap. iii. Abp. Usher’s *Religion of the Ancient Irish and Britons*. Bingham’s *Antiquities*, and Campbell, will show the origin of the Ecclesiastical titles, and the rise and growth of the Papacy; but if the reader searches the records of the New Testament for evidence for one or the other, his disappointment will be complete.

(4) See Gibbon, Book viii., chap. xlv.

saint to the Patriarch, "in the day of judgment, who dost endeavour to subject all his members to thee, under the name of Universal Bishop?" Again, he tells him, "that a universal bishop imitates Lucifer, in exalting his throne above the stars of God; for what are all the brethren, the bishops of the universal church, but the stars of heaven?" "Surely the apostle Peter was the first member of the holy and universal church. Paul, Andrew, and John, what are they else but the heads of particular churches? And yet they are all members of the church under one Head. . . . Let your Holiness acknowledge what pride it is to be called by that name which none that was truly holy was ever called by." Then, in a strain of indignant rebuke, truly and scripturally he tells him, "He was the Prince of pride, the forerunner of Antichrist, using a vain, new, rash, foolish, proud, profane, erroneous, wicked, hypocritical, singular, presumptuous, blasphemous name."¹ Could Protestant zeal go beyond this? Yet such were the feelings excited in the mind of this bishop, from some cause or other, by the assumption of a title which now constitutes the crowning point of his Holiness.

Nor was he alone in this. Pelagius, his predecessor, entered his protest against the act of the Council which conferred it. He says, "The title of Universal Bishop is altogether profane, and inconsistent with the equality of christian bishops, and it is an invasion of the supremacy of Christ, the only Head of the church."²

Such were the utterances of Popes upon this subject; and Gregory, to show the extent of his repugnance to such assumptions, and to let his humility stand out in the boldest relief to such pride and arrogance, assumed a title, which, more or less, makes one laugh when used by his successors, "The Servant of the Servants of God."³

(1) Epist., Lib. iv. Stillingfleet's Grounds of the Prot. Religion, Pt. ii., chap. vi.

(2) Birt's Lect., p. 63.

(3) Gieseler, ii., p. 132, Note. Even Augustine called himself, "Servus servorum Christi. Fulgentius, servorum Christi famulus." Among Gregory's letters there are only three before which he so styles himself. But even so late as the eleventh century other bishops, too, as well as kings and emperors, employed this title. This humility cost nothing!

What a mystery is Rome ! What contradictions it harmonises ! What extremes centre in this mystic Babylon ! The pride of its supreme head reaches to the very heavens,—his humility prostrates him upon the earth. He can trample upon kings, bestow continents upon his vassals, yet gird himself with sackcloth, and wash the beggar's feet. Monuments are raised to his honour with the inscription, "*Deservedly thou art believed to be a god upon earth,*"¹ yet, he is the servant of the servants of Christ !

But to return from this digression. Two facts are very clear from the history of the past,—and let it be remembered that it is from history as penned by men of your communion,—that the Popes are indebted to a monster of iniquity, whose interest it was to soothe and secure the Bishop of Rome, for their spiritual supremacy ; and to acts of treason and the basest crimes for their power as temporal princes.² Nothing, indeed, came amiss ; no means were slighted likely to secure the ambitious designs of succeeding Pontiffs. The history of the Popedom is one at which humanity should shudder ; and, instead of identifying either its character or principles with the pure, the lofty, the benign truths of Him who came not to destroy men's lives but to save them, truth forces us to regard it as standing in wide and fearful contrast to all that distinguished the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

"*It was not,*" says an eminent writer of the Romish church, "*till a thousand years afterwards, as you have seen, that christians took it into their heads to form a new system, to turn the head of the church into a sovereign monarch, superior to all sovereigns even in things temporal. For if he hath power to raise them up and to pull them down in any case whatever, and in any manner or method, direct or indirect, he is, to say the plain truth,*

(1) Spanheim, p. 506.

(2) See a Dissertation by Fleury on E. History from 600 to 1100. Jortin, iii., p. 146. He attributes the great changes in the Church, and the power of the Pope, to forged writings, false miracles and legends, to the ignorance and deep superstition of the people, and the wickedness of the priesthood. Fleury was a Romanist.

*the only real sovereign upon earth, and the church, for a thousand years together, knew not or executed not her own rights."*¹

Looking at the high and very large claims involved in the Supremacy, seeing that it is the very foundation stone of your whole fabric, and involves consequences the most serious and fatal which the human mind can possibly contemplate, the enquiry is forced upon our attention, Is it true? Upon what basis does it rest? You are deeply interested in it; for if it be not true, you are involved in all those appalling consequences which unavoidably result from idolatry the most gross, and the blind surrender of your judgment to Anti-Christ himself; and if it be true, I feel that my position is equally affecting in calmly and unhesitatingly rejecting it. Upon such a theme we have a right to demand, not assumption, not probabilities, but evidence the most clear, positive, and full. No proposition can be received but as it is sustained by proof. The judgment, in every case, can only be rightly secured by this. What is true is either self-evident, or can be made to appear true by such evidence as its nature admits. In a question like the one we are now discussing, involving such high, such measureless consequences,—for one of us must be a traitor to Christ, and is placing in jeopardy the interests of immortality,—we cannot allow assumption, when there should be direct testimony. Prescriptions cannot be pleaded, when we have an infallible guide—the law and the testimony. Clear, certain, unmistakable evidence is imperatively demanded, to silence doubt, and carry conviction to the mind of the thoughtful enquirer after truth. I cannot think by proxy. I cannot believe because you say I must. My faith in all matters must repose upon something. Without a basis, it would be superstitious and vain.

Nor is it unnatural to suppose that the Saviour, who has done so much for us, and feels such amazing interest

(1) See also Spanheim, pp. 348, 365, 374, 500, where the reader will find the Cardinal of Cambray's opinion on the Supremacy, as uttered before the Council of Constance.

in the prosperity of his church, who delivered his own instructions with such clearness and simplicity that "the common people heard him gladly," who has left no doubt upon all the great doctrines and duties of religion, who so perpetually appeals to the consciences and hearts of his followers, and who has made his whole service so intelligible and reasonable, would delegate such unparalleled authority to any creature, without the plainest intimation of his will. This appears to me so self-evident, that no one can possibly doubt it. All must feel that upon this subject, it must not be tradition, but Scripture; not the voice of man, but the voice of Him who is the only Head of his body the church.¹ To some extent this doctrine is recognised by your writers, and my plan now is to select some instances where you suppose it is expressed, and to mark their bearing upon this subject.

I take the following for example:—"In recompense of this faith and profession, our Lord has declared to him the dignity to which he is pleased to raise him, viz., that he to whom he had already given the name of Peter, signifying a rock (John i. 42), should be a rock, indeed, of invincible strength, for the support of the building of the church; in which building he should be next to Christ himself, the chief foundation stone, in quality of chief pastor, ruler, and governor; and should have, accordingly, all fulness of ecclesiastical power, signified by the keys of the kingdom of heaven." "By the plain course of the words, Peter is here declared to be the rock upon which the church was to be built."² "That is, the keys, the authority or chair, of doctrine, knowledge, judgment, and discretion, between true and false doctrine; the height of government, the power of making laws, of calling councils, of the principal voice in them, of confirming them, of making canons and wholesome doctrines, of abrogating

(1) Col. i. 18.

(2) Matt. xvi. 18. Rhemish Version. Note of 1843. The closest version in English would be, "Thou art a stone, and on this rock I will build my church."—Bishop Hopkins. I will only add, that most of the Fathers consider this rock, not Peter, but his confession.

the contrary, or ordaining bishops and pastors, or deposing and suspending them; finally, the power to dispense the goods of the church, both spiritual and temporal." "Therefore, by the name of keys is given that super-eminent power which is called, in comparison of the power granted to other apostles, bishops, and pastors, *plenitudo potestatis*, fulness of power."¹

I have carefully examined all the notes in the version from which I have selected these extracts, and find them much the same. The following is from another source:—"The chief Pontiff represents the person of Christ; that, as during Christ's earthly ministry, the apostles stood round him, so the assembly of cardinals, representing the Apostolic College, should stand before the Pope; but the rest of the bishops, scattered abroad everywhere, represent the apostles sent forth to preach the gospel."² Upon these supposed exclusive donations to Peter, the Supremacy is based. It has no other foundation. Upon this, and this only, it is everywhere maintained. It is recognised by the Council of Florence. It is so affirmed in the Catechism of Pius IV.,³ and in the Canon Law. Indeed, no writer who advocates it, can find the shadow of it anywhere else.

The first impression upon one's mind, in looking at this lofty claim, the consequences involved in it, and the portions of Scripture upon which it is supposed to rest, is, not conviction, but astonishment at the unblushing impudence of the men who could rear a fabric of such dimensions upon such a foundation. "*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;*" therefore, any Bishop of Rome, through all time, no matter what his character, be it infidel, heretic, adulterous whoremonger, or what not, is to be venerated and obeyed as the supreme

(1) Matt. xvi. 19. Rhemish Version. Note of 1843. A comment this singularly rich in assuming what it should prove. Alas, for the poor souls that have such teaching!

(2) Corp. Jun. Can. apud. Bp. Hopkins on the Church of Rome, &c., p. 20.

(3) "As the successor of St. Peter, and the one and legitimate Vicar of Christ, he therefore presides over the universal church, the father and governor of all the faithful, of bishops also, and of all other prelates, be their station, rank, or power what they may."

and infallible Head of the Church, the vicar and representative of Christ! The chasm is too wide, the violence to common sense too strong, and the logical bridge with which you try to span this gloomy void too ethereal for poor mortals, who think, ever to attempt to cross it. What Coleridge somewhere says of the Socinians, may be said of you, "That they would lose all character for honesty, if they were to explain their neighbour's will with the same latitude of interpretation which they do the Scriptures." In reading over these expressions, the question constantly rises in one's mind, "What have these to do with the Bishop of Rome?" Granted that Peter had all that you contend for. Suppose he was entrusted by his Master with all power claimed by his Holiness; that he was the Vicar of Christ, and Head of the Church on earth; that he was superior to all monarchs and earthly sovereigns; that he had the power of inflicting punishment, or relieving from it; that he could absolve from oaths, and free men from moral obligation, making virtue vice, and vice virtue; that he had the keys of earth, heaven, and hell, and could bind whomsoever he would, or impose upon them fearful punishment for sins;—I say, suppose that the bestowment of the Saviour included all this, and as much more as the most sycophantic eulogist of the Pontiff could desire, what then? A multitude of questions crowd upon the mind, each demanding an answer.

Let me ask a few. Did not all the apostles receive the same delegation of authority and power, whatever it may be?¹ Would there not, then, be as many separate Vicars of Christ and Heads of the Church on earth as there were apostles who were enriched with these bestowments? Would not each church, founded by these holy men, put forth the same claim as the Church of Rome, to be the mother and mistress of all churches? Might not the church at Jerusalem, founded and nurtured by most of the apostles unitedly, have the highest claim, upon your own principles, to this Supremacy? Did Peter ever claim or exercise any authority over his brethren, of the simplest

(1) John xx. 22, 23. Matt. xviii. 18.

kind, to say nothing of the haughty pretensions of the Roman Pontiff?¹ Did he exercise the power of the two swords, and rule the church, his brethren, and the monarchs of the earth, with a rod of iron? Upon these latter points I find not, in the decrees of your Councils, a single particle of proof to establish your view. We know, from the clearest evidence, that Peter placed himself upon an equality with his brethren, and laid no claim to any distinction of supremacy over them.²

But I will waive these questions. I will suppose, for a moment, that the case was the reverse of what it really is; that Peter really was only thus distinguished by his Divine Master; still the question returns, What then? Is there anything in the record which tells us that the Bishop of Rome was to succeed him? Is he mentioned? Does anything in the promise warrant us in the conclusion that men, whose main distinction was pride, ambition, the love of the world, and a boundless grasping for supremacy over their brethren, should be invested with these honours?³ Not a solitary fact from the Sacred Records has been adduced by all your writers, upon which this Supremacy can be built. Opinion we have, assumption in rich abundance, but not a fragment of proof has yet been offered, to show that he who now wears the tiara, has lawfully or scripturally succeeded to apostolic power. I confess, after a careful review of

(1) Let Cardinal Cusanus reply:—"We know that Peter did not receive more power from Christ than the other apostles; for nothing was said to Peter which was not said to the others; therefore, we rightly say, that all the apostles were equal to Peter in power."—Elliot, p. 623.

(2) The reader will find in the following passages of Scripture abundant evidence of the equality of all the apostles (1 Peter v. 1, 2; 2 Peter iv. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 50; Eph. ii. 20; Rom. xxi. 14; Acts xx. 28, &c.) Nothing, in all these allusions, corresponding with the claims of my Lord at Rome!

(3) "Oh, that there were no primates, no precedence of rank or station, no privileged predominance, so that we might be distinguished only by moral superiority! But now the privilege of standing on the right, or on the left, or in the middle, the higher or lower place of honour, the walking before or in a line with others, have already furnished us with endless foolish causes of provocation, and brought into danger, not only the sheep of the flock, but also the shepherds," &c.—Ullman's Gregory, pp. 216, 217. Again, writing to a friend, he says, "I am weary of the struggle with envy, and with the holy bishops, who destroy all chances of union on public-spirited grounds, and sacrifice the cause of the faith to their private squabbles."—*Ibid.*, p. 264. See, also, p. 246, &c. But enough!

the question, and the evidence upon which it rests, that I should blush for myself, to receive any important dogma upon such grounds.

Not for the sake of giving validity to my reasoning or force to my argument, would I adduce a single passage from a Father, because I avow with Chrysostom, that "*He whose belief accordeth with the Bible is a christian; but he who is at variance with it, is far removed from Christianity.*"¹ Still it may please some to know that antiquity is as opposed to the doctrine as the Scriptures. Father after Father might be selected whose expositions of Scripture are the very opposite of those upon which the impious usurpation is based. Father after Father, who marked the encroachments of ambitious and profligate prelates of the Romish see, and repudiated them with scorn. Let me select one or two as examples of a class. The Apostolic Fathers exhibit no sign of it. Clement begins his epistle as unlike a modern Pope as possible. "*The church of God which is at Rome, to the church of God which is at Corinth.*" It lays no claim to superiority; it puts forth no authority; it is the fraternal appeal to one perfectly equal, on the errors which prevail. In Barnabas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Hermas, not a shadow of an allusion exists. Apocryphal gospels and narratives, so abundant in the early ages, are a perfect blank on this subject. Apostolic constitutions, though ordering bishops to be honoured amongst the people as a God,² yet know nothing of the Supremacy. Cyril, in his lectures, never teaches the dogma. Cyprian, though one of the advocates of the excessive and unscriptural authority of the episcopate, yet never recognises this, but recognises the equality of the bishops, and more than once denounces the spirit and growing ambition of some of Rome's prelates. His letter to Cornelius, and that prelate's in return, indicate the equality of brotherhood.³ Councils and Fathers forbid the carrying of any case beyond their own province for decision. Again and again

(1) Neander's Chry., i., p. 250.

(2) Whiston's edition, B. ii., p. 16.

(3) See Letters. Library of the Fathers.

this is reiterated.¹ Space forbids enlargement here, and I can only say, that my conviction is deep of the utter impossibility of any advocate of the Supremacy maintaining it from any authority which can be adduced from the early Fathers.² Many absurd notions may be sustained by their authority, but into this, the result of crime, at which a Nero might blush, and an ambition which halted at no difficulties in the way of the aggrandisement of the Papacy, they did not fall. Poor men, they have enough to answer for, without laying this overwhelming burden upon them!³

Besides the utter failure of any attempt, by all fair reasoning, to find these mischievous and blasphemous notions in the Scriptures, or in the first and comparatively pure ages of the church, there is another link in your chain which is equally defective, and therefore ruinous to your claim. I state not this as attaching the slightest value to it, but on another ground, simply to show that the whole fabric is baseless and absurd. The Supremacy is mainly, nay, entirely, founded on Rome's

(1) The Nican. Can. 5. Many Africans also. Sozoman, iii., p. 8. Cyprian abounds with proofs of this in his Letters.

(2) That Rome had an influence very early is not denied; but it arose from causes the opposite of those which her modern advocates claim. Her political importance, the wealth and influence of the city, invested her with this; whilst the ambition of her prelates soon turned it to their own account.—See Note to Cyprian's Letters, p. 164. To Barrow's unanswerable work on the Supremacy, and to Faber on Transubstantiation, especially that part in reply to Cardinal Wiseman, pp. 62—5, the reader may be referred with confidence. Many Romanists rest their opinion of Peter being at Rome upon the expression used in his 1 Ep. v. 13, regardless of the consequences which flow from the application.—See Rhemish Note and Fulke's Reply.

(3) An illustration of this may not be amiss. St. Barnard, the last of the Fathers, thus speaks:—"O Lord! thy pastors now fleece the flocks; the sheep are turned into wolves; the defenders of the church dissipate its substance; those who ought to be sober are daily intoxicated; the prelates are Pilates; those who ought to be chaste are guilty of incest; the shepherds are seducers, &c. . . . They are ministers of Christ, but they are servants of Anti-Christ."—Taylor, p. 312. Other examples may be seen in Neander's Life of the Saint. Cardinal Hugo, addressing the Council of Lyons, in 1252, says,—"On our arrival here we found three or four houses of ill-fame; but at our departure we have left but one; it is true it extends through the whole city, and reaches from east to west."—*Ibid*, p. 315. Innocent VIII. exhibited to the world the monstrous spectacle of a Pope residing in the Vatican with eight natural children, all publicly acknowledged. Most of the splendid palaces now in Rome belong to the families of the sons or nephews of former Popes, upon whom the immense wealth of the Church has been expended.—See Lady Morgan's Italy, and Ranke's History of the Popes. Gieseler, iii. A.D. 1409—1517.

being the seat of Peter. Failing Scripture, his Holiness, we are gravely told, is the successor of the Prince of the Apostles. It has no other foundation. Upon nothing else in the world can it be placed. Upon this matter, then, we have a right to demand proof. The evidence should be explicit and clear, and leave no standing-place for doubt. If you have it, you are bound to adduce it. I know not what may exist in the archives of the Vatican; but as yet I have seen none to remove my scruples. *Can you prove that Peter ever was Bishop of Rome? that he ever was in the imperial city? or preached the gospel to its idolatrous inhabitants?* I know the statements of your writers upon this subject; but I am forced to confess, that the most zealous and daring has failed to adduce anything like probability, whilst there is much which is absolutely contradictory and absurd. No allusion to this occurs in Scripture. Luke tells us that he visited Corinth, Antioch, Babylon, and Jerusalem, but not Rome. The less are particularised, but not the greater. There is no agreement amongst you as to the time of his visit. "Eusebius says it was in the time of Claudius; Jerome saith he sat there twenty-five years, until the last of Nero, whence it must follow that he came thither the second or third of Claudius; yet Damasus saith he came to Rome in the beginning of Nero's empire, and sat there twenty-five years; whereas Nero reigned but fourteen years. He saith also, that his disputation with Simon Magus was in the presence of Nero the emperor. Eusebius reporteth it under Claudius. Antoninus, Bishop of Rome, as Niciphorus testifieth, did write that Peter was translated from Antioch to Rome, and from thence he passed to Alexandria, because he might more profit the Church there."¹ From A.D. 43 to 68,²

(1) Fulke's Confutation of the Rhe. Annot. Rome, xvi., p. 14.

(2) This fiction of Peter being first Bishop of Rome, proceeded from the Clementines, and was propagated in the Catholic church by the Recognitions. Cyprian is the first who designates the Roman chair, *locum Petri* and *Petri Cathedra*; but, at the same time, he takes all bishops to be successors of Peter. Thus he was of the same opinion as Eusebius, Rufinus, &c., that Peter, during his stay at Rome, had the supreme direction of the church there, without having been con-

the period of his residence in Rome, as asserted by some of your writers, we have, at least, eight notices of Rome from Paul, without a single allusion to Peter. The former arrived in the city, and dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and preached to the Jews who resorted to him. In 52, he wrote to the Galatians from the same city; but there is no mention of the Vicar of Christ. In the epistle to the Romans, written about 58, he salutes many by name; but we find no allusion to the Prince of the Apostles. About 61, he addressed the church at Ephesus from Rome; but still he is silent about Peter's episcopate at Rome. The year following, we find him addressing the Philippians and the Colossians from Rome, and, after mentioning the names of certain brethren, he says, Col. iv. 11, "These *only* are my fellow-workers in the kingdom of God." No allusion occurs in Philemon, written in 62, from the same city. In the second epistle to Timothy, written just before his death from the same place, he tells him, that "at his first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." Yet during all this period, if we are to credit your writers, Peter filled the episcopal throne, and governed the church at Rome. I think the silence of the apostle goes far, if not entirely, to demolish the assumptions of these men. Moreover, it is quite certain that Peter was at Jerusalem, at what you delight to designate the first Council of the Church, which was held, according to some of your friends, in 49, by others, in 51. Paul tells us also, that three years after his conversion, which is supposed to have occurred in 37, he went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and found him there with his brethren. Fourteen years after that, he went again to Jerusalem, and there he found the apostle. Yet, according to some of your annalists, in 51 he had filled the Roman chair for eight years at this time. He governed then twenty-five years, and was martyred in

nected with it as bishop.—Gieseler's Comp., ii., p. 264, Note 9. I may just add here, that the Epistles of Clement contain no allusion to Peter's episcopate, and certainly none to Clement's supremacy as his successor. The Clementines and Recognitions were forged works in the third century, attributed to Clement of Rome.—Neander's Hist. Chu., ii., pp. 441—2. Gieseler's Comp., i., pp. 206—11.

68.¹ An example of non-residence this of the most singular kind. I leave the explication of this, and the facts upon which it is evidently based, to you for reflection.

For a moment let us grant that probability is in favour of your case; that Peter visited Rome, preached there, and even governed and regulated the church there. What then? Is the conclusion self-evident that he was bishop? Was he bishop of every city where he thus acted, in his long and active career as a minister of Christ? Upon your own showing, he was the father of all bishops, the representative of God on earth, the head of the church, and the prince of the apostles. To make him bishop is to degrade him. It is to lower his dignity,—from the master to become a servant, and from the chief to be a subordinate, in the church of Christ. I admit that there is more probability that he was at Rome, than that he was bishop of the church. The former is, comparatively, an early tradition; but the latter dates its origin much later. His office precluded this. Indeed, it was incompatible with it. Nothing was so high as apostleship in the church of Him “who gave first apostles, then prophets, then pastors and teachers” (1 Cor. xii. 28). It was immediately from Christ. It included a general superintendence over the whole church. It was extraordinary, and could admit of no succession. It was as an apostle, and not as Christ’s vicar, that Peter had authority, in common with his brethren, to bind and loose in the church of Christ. The apostleship of the circumcision was entrusted to him, and that of the Gentiles to Paul. Cardinal Baronius says somewhere, “It was his office not to stay in one place, but, as much as possible, to travel over the world, not only to bring those who did not believe to the obedience of the faith, but also to establish believers.” This was his simple work. The episcopate is restricted; the apostleship is universal. The one is limited in its government to a single church; the other extended over all churches. The duty of the apostles was to preach the Gospel every-

(1) For the dates given, I refer to Lardner’s Works, v., chaps. xi., xii.

where,—form churches from the converts they had won to Christ,—regulate their order,—appoint pastors over them in the Lord,—and interpose at any time for their order and prosperity. We repeat, in this they can have no successors. The apostle was above the bishop; and, as such, the apostles, Peter and Paul, the supposed founders of the church at Rome, could appoint pastors, but could never act as bishops of that communion at all. Their history, their labours, their whole course as apostolic men, as recorded in the New Testament, will place before any reader of ordinary power, the meaning of all those passages of Sacred Writ upon which you delight to lay such stress. Their full meaning was exemplified in the course of these illustrious men. Not a power with which Christ invested them but what was necessary to the interests of his church, and the fulness of which they exhibited in their life and ministry. With them everything was consistent. The purity of their life was in harmony with their doctrine; their character as much illustrated the lofty morality of our Saviour's teaching as the doctrine they taught. Upon anything else they would have frowned. Men whose life has been steeped in every crime; who have climbed to their giddy pre-eminence by trampling upon every moral and social tie; who have luxuriated in the choicest sweets of this world's good; who have rivalled monarchs in the pomp and splendour of their courts; who, under pretence of poverty, have parcelled out the fairest portion of the earth to their sons and nephews; I say, to claim for these men, under whom the earth has groaned for ages, and whose destruction would be the birth of liberty and happiness to millions, to be successors to men whose glory was poverty, suffering, purity, and separation from the world, is an insult to enlightened reason, and the highest offence against moral truth.

The claims of the Papacy are unchanged. His Holiness, though stripped of his power, still clings with the tenacity of death to his loftiest pretensions, and the recollections of the past. All the forms of the Supremacy

are still retained. The shadows of departed grandeur still linger; but, happily for humanity, they are only shadows. He would grasp the thunder, but the hand is paralysed. A noise occasionally is heard from the Vatican, but it is only the mutterings of age or decrepitude. How humbling the position of the mighty Pontiff. He, before whom the proudest monarchs have trembled, lately fled from the indignation of his own oppressed subjects. It was humbling to see the successor of the Gregorys, the Hildebrands, and the Leos, disguised in a slouched hat, and in a faded livery, occupying the place of a footman behind a carriage. It was Pius IX., God's vicegerent, the head of the church, escaping from the fury of his own children! The Popedom can never recover its mediæval splendour. Monarchs will never again stand shivering with cold, as humble suppliants, at the gate of the proud Pontiff's palace. Kings will not again act as grooms, and hold his palfrey while he mounts. Continents will not again be bestowed at his pleasure, and civilised nations will not again tremble at the thunder of his wrath. Based upon no Scriptural truth, proved by the sober facts of history a usurpation and a fraud, the Roman Supremacy has lost its hold upon men. Sustained by physical force exclusively, in the stronghold of its power, and in the chief circle of its influence, it only awaits the nod of its political masters, to return from whence it came. Light is being diffused, the elements of human progress are working in all lands, "the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever," is now translated into one hundred and sixty languages, and can be read by nearly six hundred millions of people; whilst the love of just and rational liberty is animating all minds with intense ardour, and the iron grasp of priestly despotism is now too feeble to arrest the progress. The days of the Papal Supremacy, I believe, are numbered, and the period of its entire removal is fast hastening. Soon, I hope, it will stand, like many other things in the world's history, as a monument of human folly, and as a proof of the truth of the Divine Word. The Saviour must reign

in unmingled holiness, spirituality, and truth, over all the world; and as this advances, the cunning, the impurity, the deception, and the cruelty which sustain this system, must retire from before him. Liberty, truth, and holiness will then triumph, and man universally will be blest.

LETTER III.

AURICULAR CONFESSION.

No one familiar with the system of modern Romanism can fail to be struck with its singular adaptation to the ends for which it exists. It aims at supremacy over the minds of its votaries, and to reduce the whole of religion to a mere machine, worked exclusively by a priesthood. For such a purpose it has no equal. There is nothing like it under heaven, and human ingenuity would fail in supplying an additional principle. Its net-work of forms and ceremonies is so entirely thrown around its members, that they have no possible way of escape from its influence. From his Holiness, through every grade to the humblest priest, there is a mutual interest, and a mutual dependence. The centre can touch the extremities with certainty. One will, in the main, pervades the whole community, and a ruthless spiritual despotism holds in fearful servitude the whole hierarchy.¹ Upon the Pope the clergy are dependents, and without them the whole people are a mere nonentity. They stand between them and God, and are, beyond all controversy, the medium of approach to the Divine Majesty. From this there can be no escape. The priest grasps his victims in early infancy, and deceives them, with a worse than fable, by introducing them into the society of the faithful. He guides the development of their powers, and secretly probes the youthful heart to master its inner workings, and subordinate them to his will. He associates himself with their most important social enjoyments, and withholds his sanction or extends his ghostly blessing at his pleasure; whilst the destinies of the awful future are under his control, and

(1) See Michelet's *Jesuits*, p. 27.

by his false claim to the power of the keys, can open heaven, or threaten with the miseries of the lost. I say, there is nothing like this. For its extent and completeness no mortal could add a single fraction to the Romish hierarchy.

From political debasement I turn with loathing, but its forms are mild and lovely compared with that of mind. My manhood revolts against the former,—my moral sense against the latter. We should seek the removal of the one by every peaceful appliance; but rebellion the most fierce against the other is our imperative and immediate duty. The one may interfere with the exercise of rights, which might or might not augment my power or enjoyments as a citizen; but the other destroys all that can confer moral dignity upon my nature, that can render my actions free or virtuous, and exposes me to the full influence or designs of any man who may wield this fearful power.

I admire genius. I love to see mind manifesting itself in a thousand ways to display its superiority over nature, and force her laws to contribute to its interests. It is a higher effort still to control mind. To see some master-spirit not only influencing it, but annihilating its freedom, and moulding it according to his pleasure. Higher still, to see him reducing it to a system, and rendering it so potent, that the weak shall rule the strong, and though a mere driveller, yet subordinating the mind of the superior to his own will. Auricular Confession unfolds all this. It is the master-piece of Romish policy. It completes the perfect thralldom of all sincere Romanists, and holds them fast in its iron grasp. I have shown that other dogmas of your system deprive you of liberty of thought and action, but this investigates the heart, and threatens with the severest punishment the slightest motion towards spiritual freedom. It encircles your whole nature. From its serpent folds no emotion, thought, feeling, desire, word, or action can escape. Perils the most fearful are before you, should you attempt to elude its power. The facts which will be adduced illustrative

of this comparatively modern dogma of the Church will compel the reader, we think, to say that no language can sufficiently portray or denounce its abominations.

The first decree, I believe, upon Auricular Confession was in the year 1215. Bishop Challoner says,—

“The fourth Council of Lateran ordains, ‘That every one of the faithful, of both sexes, after they come to years of discretion, shall in private confess all their sins, at least once a year, to their own pastor; and take care to fulfil, to the best of their power, the penances enjoined them,’ &c.”¹

The Fathers at Trent, in the decree about the sacrament of penance, thus decide upon this topic,—

“The universal church has always understood that a full confession of sins was instituted by the Lord as a part of the sacrament of penance now explained, and that it is necessary, by Divine appointment, for all that sin after baptism; because our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was about to ascend from earth to heaven, left his priests in his place, as presidents and judges, to whom all mortal offences into which the faithful might fall should be submitted, that they might pronounce sentence of remission or retention of sins by the power of the keys. For it is plain that the priests cannot sustain the office of judge if the cause be unknown to them, nor inflict equitable punishments if sins are only confessed in general, and not minutely and individually described. For this reason it follows, that penitents are bound to rehearse, in confession, all mortal sins of which, after diligent examination of themselves, they are conscious, even though they be of the most secret kind, and only committed against the two last precepts of the decalogue,” &c.”²

In the Catechism published in 1566, by command of Pius IV., the doctrine is more explicitly stated, and reasons assigned for minute details in confession. We quote the following as a specimen,—

“With the bare enumeration of our mortal sins we should not be satisfied; that enumeration we should accompany with the relation of such circumstances as considerably aggravate or extenuate their malice. Some circumstances are such as, of themselves, to constitute moral guilt; on no account or occasion whatever, therefore, are such circumstances to be omitted. Has any one imbrued his hands in the blood of his fellow-man? He must state whether his victim was a layman or

(1) The Garden of the Soul, p. 5.

(2) Cramp’s Text Book of Popery, pp. 178, 179. Sin is said, by Romish divines, to be either deadly or venial. The deadly sins, according to the Douay Catechism, are pride, covetousness, luxury, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth. Venial sin, according to Dens, “is that which does not bring spiritual death to the soul.”—See Protest., ii., p. 290. Elliot’s Romanism, p. 205.

an ecclesiastic. Has he had criminal intercourse with any one? He must state whether the female was married or unmarried, a relative, or a person consecrated to God by vow, &c. So important is integrity to confession, that if the penitent wilfully neglect to accuse himself of some sins which should be confessed, and suppress others, he not only does not obtain the pardon of his sins, but involves himself in deeper guilt. Our confession should be such as to reflect a true image of our lives, such as we ourselves know them to be, exhibiting as doubtful that which is doubtful, and as certain that which is certain."

With the exception of this last extract, we have little more than the bare fact affirmed in the decrees of the Councils; but in this we have a slight glimpse of the practical working of the dogma in the hands of the confessor. We say slight, because it falls far short of the disgusting details given by some of your bishops upon this subject, when writing for the edification of the faithful. No apology is necessary to you for the insertion of the following, as no doubt you are already familiar with the work from which I quote; but I feel that I owe one to my readers. I have hesitated, and thought seriously about it. The only reason which has weighed with me, is the importance of the present crisis, and the imperative necessity that Romanism should be seen in its true colours. The work from which I quote is by a Bishop and Vicar Apostolic, and is expressly written for the edification of the laity, and is now, I believe, one of the most popular devotional works you have in this country. I will only remark, that it will be seen that it is intended for all classes, young and old, and is designed to aid them in preparation for confession. The part from which I quote is entitled, "An Examination of Conscience upon the Ten Commandments," &c. This is the beginning,—

"Have you been guilty of heresy, or disbelief of any article of faith, or of voluntarily doubting any article of faith? How often? and for how long a time? Or have you rashly exposed yourself to the danger of infidelity, by reading bad books, or keeping wicked company? How often? Have you by word or deed denied your religion? or gone to the churches or meetings of heretics, so as to join any way with them in their worship? or to give slander? How often?"

Under No. VI. occurs the following,—

"Have you been guilty of fornication, or adultery, or incest, or any sin against nature, either with a person of the same sex, or with any

other creature? How often? Or have you designed or attempted any such sin, or sought to induce others to do it? How often? Have you been guilty of self-pollution, or of immodest touches of yourself? How often? Have you touched others, or permitted yourself to be touched by others, immodestly? Or given or taken wanton kisses or embraces, or any other such liberties? How often? Have you looked at immodest objects with pleasure or danger? Read immodest books or songs to yourself or others? Kept indecent pictures? Willingly given ear to, or taken pleasure in hearing, loose discourses? Or sought to see or hear anything that was immodest? How often? Have you exposed yourself to wanton company? Or played at any indecent plays? Or frequented masquerades, balls, comedies, &c., with danger of your chastity? How often? Have you been guilty of any immodest discourses, wanton stories, jests, or songs, or words of double meaning? How often? And before how many? And were the persons before whom you spoke or sung, married or single? For all this you are obliged to confess, by reason of the evil thoughts these things are apt to create in the hearers."

The remainder of this paragraph I must omit. The bishop resumes this revolting subject again, and says on No. IX:—

"Have you willingly taken pleasure in unchaste thoughts or imaginations? Or entertained unchaste desires? Were the objects of your desires maids, or married persons, or kinsfolk, or persons consecrated to God? How often? Have you taken pleasure in the irregular motions of the flesh? Or not endeavoured to resist them? How often? Have you entertained with pleasure the thoughts of saying or doing anything which it would be a sin to say or do? How often? Have you had the desire or design of committing any sin? Of what sin? And how often?"¹

Gother gives much the same directions, showing under six heads how this Sixth Commandment is broken. I give the sixth:—

"By immodest actions. 1. In occasioning pollution in one's self or others. 2. In committing the sin of impurity, and whether effected by soliciting, seducing with promises, or forcing, and whether it be by fornication, adultery, or incest. 3. In sins of incest."²

To multitudes of persons, such a moral prostration of the mind seems impossible. Looking at humanity

(1) *The Garden of the Soul*; or, *A Manual of Spiritual Exercise*, &c. By the Ven. and Right Rev. Dr. Richard Challoner, Bp. of Debra, and Vicar Apostolic, pp. 233—4, 237.

(2) *Key of Heaven*; or, *A Posey of Prayer*, p. 274. On the Second Commandment not a word occurs on images or idols, and only one sentence in Challoner. No one could tell from these works that it really existed! Why is it omitted?

from the eminence we have reached, we are led to think it cannot be, and Protestants are difficult to convince that these things in our days exist. Every feeling of their manhood would render it intolerable. "It might have been in ages past! History, which unfolds such fearful tales of unparalleled sensuality and crime in bygone days, will be silent for the future!" Alas, good easy souls, they forget that your boast is, "Always the same!" They are ignorant, moreover, of the early training of your priests for this very work. With these pollutions their minds are soon familiarised. The class of books they are called to study, far exceeds anything we have given upon this subject from "The Garden of the Soul." Dens and Bailey contain things which no Protestant would print, or would wish to have read. From the former, I confess, I gained more insight into modes of crime and methods of self-indulgence than from all other sources during the last forty years. My nature shudders this moment whilst they are only called to my recollection, and especially whilst I think that some of the virtuous, maidenly, and matronly daughters of my country may be exposed to their pestilential influence, by questions from men whose moral training has familiarised them with vice, and at the same time torn from their nature all that is pure and elevating in the social and domestic relationship of life. Sir, these are entombed in a language suited to the priesthood; but they are not peculiar to Dens & Co.,—they abound in manuals adapted for the atmosphere of Ireland.¹ I challenge any priest or bishop you have, to put these portions of your class-books into an English dress, that the public may see the abomination of your moral slaughter-house. I distinctly avow my belief that in no language, that in no society, are such things uttered or found, as are distilled into the minds of your priesthood to enable them to deal with modest women. If I defame you, publish them and let the public judge. Will the reader pardon the following? It is moderate, and is

(1) The reader will find examples of this in "The Roman Catholic Confessional Exposed."—Dublin: Curry & Co.

given by a friend of mine in a little work published a few years ago. It is from one of Dens's instructions to priests hearing the confessions of those who are approaching marriage. I beg the reader's attention to the serpent cunning which the last sentence unfolds.

"Prudent confessors are accustomed, and lay it down as a rule, to ask regularly from all betrothed persons (of both sexes), whether, from occasion of their approaching marriage, there occurred to them any wanton thought? Whether they permitted kisses and other greater liberties, because, perhaps, they thought that greater freedom was now allowed them? And, since the young woman is more influenced by modesty, we are accustomed, for that reason, to hear the betrothed husband's confession first, that she may afterwards more confidently reveal what she knows to be already known to the confessor."¹

Nor is this all. The victim cannot escape. That from which her whole soul would recoil is ruthlessly unclothed and set before the young bride. Let the reader ponder the following :—

"In every carnal sin, the circumstance of marriage must be expressed in confession. Are married persons at any time to be asked in confession about the refusal of . . . ? Yes; particularly the women, who, through ignorance or shame, are sometimes silent on that sin; but the question is not to be put abruptly, but to be prudently framed; for instance, whether they have quarrelled with their husband? What was the cause of those quarrels? Whether they did on such occasions refuse . . . ? If they confess that they have transgressed, they should be asked chastely, whether anything followed contrary to conjugal chastity?"²

The same things in substance are uttered by Bailey. In his directions he says,—

"A prudent confessor will, as far as in his power, by kindness of language, increase the confidence of his penitents; will advance from more general statements to more particular, from the *less shameful* to those which are more so; nor will he take his commencement from the external acts, but from the thoughts. Has not the penitent resolved some improper ones in his or her mind? Was this done advertently? What kind of desire was it? Has he or she felt unlawful passions? But if the penitent shall declare that he or she hath not felt them, the confessor ought usually to stop there, unless the penitent be very ignorant and dull. But if the penitent shall answer that he or she had improper thoughts or irregular desires, the confessor shall ask whether any improper actions followed. But if the penitent shall confess this, the confessor shall ask again what were those actions."

(1) Pearce on Auricular Confession, p. 19.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 19.

"If the penitent be a girl, she should be asked whether she has adorned herself in order to please men? Whether, for this purpose, she has used paint, or stripped her arms, shoulders, or neck? Whether she has frequented churches in order that she might show herself in the vestibule or window, so as to attract observation? Whether she has spoken, or read, or sung anything immodest? Whether she is not attached to somebody with a more peculiar affection? Whether she has not permitted him to take some liberty with her? Whether she has not allowed herself to be kissed? But if occasion should be given for ulterior inquisition, the confessor will fulfil his duty, but very prudently and circumspectly."¹

"The parish priest, either himself in the tribunal of penance, or at least by means of some pious matron (and this will oftentimes be a more prudent plan), ought to instruct married persons, and more especially married women, what they are to observe in this respect. And since women not unfrequently conceal offences with respect to this, in the sacrament of confession, through modesty or ignorance, it is expedient sometimes to interrogate them on the subject, but cautiously and prudently, not abruptly. For example, it may be asked whether there have been any disagreements between her and her husband? What were the causes of them? What were the effects of them?" &c.²

"And what can young men be specially examined in at the age of about twenty years, sufficiently vigorous, and like men of the world, or given to drink? Answer:—About the sins of luxury; first by general questions, *and from afar*; for example, whether the penitent frequents persons of the other sex? If he allow that he does, whether any improper words were said? What followed? &c. If he answer in the negative, it can be asked, Whether he is at any time tormented with improper thoughts or dreams? If he say, Yes, it is fit to proceed to other questions. The same form of prudence shall be observed *about a young girl*, or a woman vainly decked."³

"Are the married to be at any time asked in confession about denying the marriage duty? Answer:—Yes; particularly the women, who, through ignorance or modesty, are sometimes silent on that sin; but the question is not to be put abruptly, but to be framed prudently; for instance, Whether they have quarrelled with their husbands? What was the cause of their quarrel? Whether they did, upon such occasions, deny their husbands the marriage duty? But if they acknowledge they have transgressed, they ought to be asked chastely, whether anything followed contrary to conjugal continence, namely, pollution?"⁴

(1) Tract de Præcept. Decal. apud Lord's Maynooth College, p. 427.

(2) Tract de Matrimeo, *Ibid*, p. 427.

(3) Dens, v. 6, p. 125. The Confessional Unmasked, by C. B., pp. 39—40.

(4) Dens, v. 7, p. 149. *Ibid*, p. 43. The writer has often passed the house of a Catholic in Brussels, who, since his marriage, has never entered a church, or allowed his wife to enter one, simply from the questions put to her in the confessional after her marriage.

But enough of this pollution.

Let it, moreover, be remembered, that through this process of moral, or rather immoral, dissection all must pass. There is no choice. The maid of seven years,¹ as well as the exhausted sensualist, must familiarise her mind with these things. Her young nature must learn much, for the first time, from this process. Only think of a high-minded girl, virtuous and conscientious, for the first time examining herself in these matters. She cannot understand some allusions; nay, she will probably be ignorant of the meaning of most of them. Yet she feels impelled by duty to enquire, and discovers, for the first time, the abominations of vice from the lips of her spiritual instructor. She must be restrained from sin by intimate converse with it. Her maiden purity is to be sustained by wading through this pollution. Her mind is to be freed from sinful emotions by crowding it with the seeds of all impurities. And she is to be full-armed against vice by blunting and crucifying all the higher and finer sensibilities of her moral nature. Who can tell the tortures, the mental anguish, the amount of self-sacrifice, which a mind trained to habits of virtue and moral purity must endure in the preparatory process? but what a hell it must be when crushed by the efforts of the well-trained confessor, as he ruthlessly drags from the depths of her soul thought after thought, and lays them before her!

Thousands will participate in the feelings expressed by the writer of the following lines, as descriptive of her state at such a time:—

“Never shall I forget my sensations, on two or three occasions, at that time. Once, my confessor having been unexpectedly called away, I went to the church porch for air, while awaiting his return. How I gasped for some relief to my over-wrought mind! The memory even now oppresses me! But that was soon superseded by feelings more insupportable still, as he came with his unchanged smile and broad gaze, to summon me back to my terrible task. Even this, however, sank into insignificance a day or two afterwards, when I went to proceed with my confession. I was desired to repeat what had most harrowed my feelings over again. I replied I had confessed it once already, and ventured some demur; when I was told in the most

(1) At this early age the practice of confession begins.

merciless manner, that if I had he had forgotten it, and the command enforced with the consolatory assurance that the repetition would only serve to humble me. A feeling almost akin to suffocation for the moment overwhelmed me, and I felt as though the words would choke me. I leaned against the confessional for support; but with promptings and suggestions he at last gained his point. On rising from my knees I was unable to stand for the time; a kind of fallen and crushed feeling seemed to paralyse me, both physically and mentally."¹

What a revelation is this! What internal evidence of truthfulness does it unfold! Who can imagine a female subject to the process already indicated, with any sense of self-respect, with any sense of moral feeling, and doubt for a moment the intolerable anguish which it would produce? Let it be remembered, Sir, that in the hands of the ghostly confessor she cannot escape. They are alone. Confession is made either in some place in the church, or in the residence of the priest. No third party can intervene. He is bound to secrecy. All laws, human and divine, guard the inviolability of the seal of confession, and against its sacrilegious infraction the Church denounces her heaviest chastisement.² He sits there invested with the power of judge, counsellor, father, physician, and teacher. Nay, he is higher still. His character is more than human. He is invested with authority more than mortal. He stands between the trembling penitent and God. He is the vicegerent of God, "and his voice is to be heard as the voice of Christ." "In the minister of God," says the author of the Tridentine Catechism, "who sits in the tribunal of penance, as her legitimate judge, she venerates the power and person of our Lord Jesus Christ; for, in the administration of this as in that of the other sacraments, the priest represents the character and discharges the functions of Christ." Invested with these powers, he can probe the very depths

(1) *The Progress of Beguilement to Romanism*, by Eliza Smith, p. 70. I recommend my readers to peruse this work.

(2) *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, p. 282. Dens says, "What, therefore, ought a confessor to answer, being interrogated concerning truth, which he has known through sacramental confession alone? He ought to answer, that he does not know it; and, if necessary, confirm the same with an oath!" Such is the morality of Rome. Yet Townsend informs us, that in Italy it was frequently violated, and with fearful results, after the return of Pio Nono.—Italy, p. 239. A similar fact is stated by Dickens in his *Italy*, p. 201.

of her soul. She is morally unclothed before him. Her inner nature is unrobed. Every feeling and emotion, every thought and desire, must be revealed. Nothing can escape his eagle glance. If she is doubtful, he can suggest, and relieve her perplexity by other questions. If she falters upon the brink of the terrible gulf before her, he can soothe and animate by the fact that her position will humble her, and humility is good for the soul. If nature instinctively recoils, he can warn by the threat of withholding absolution; and thus all the powers of the future world are grasped and shaken over her, to quail her spirit and bow it to the priestly will. "So important, as we have already said, is integrity to the confessor, that if the penitent wilfully neglect to accuse himself of some sins which should be confessed, and suppress others, he not only does not obtain the pardon of his sins, but involves himself in deeper guilt."¹ In like manner, Bishop Hay teaches his readers, "Now, it is self-evident that the priest can neither act with justice and prudence, in forgiving and retaining sins, nor observe the just proportion in imposing the proper punishment suitable to the guilt and disposition of the sinner, unless he knows the real state of his soul, both as to his guilt and disposition."²

Nor is this all. A female has no redress. She, too, is bound to secrecy. Around her this net of iniquity is most closely entwined. Not a question which prurient curiosity may have prompted in the shade of the confessional, dare she divulge. Upon the intercourse there, silence has imposed its seal. Even, if by accident, a sentence should be heard by one standing by, the secret must be kept inviolate. Her lacerated heart cannot pour the tide of its sorrows even into a parent's or a husband's ear. Here is the climax of despotism. It absolutely forbids complaint; and whatever liberties may be taken

(1) Catechism of Trent, p. 278.

(2) Sincere Christian Instructed, p. 78. Dens teaches the same: "No one can be a fair judge in a cause unknown to him, therefore he ought to know the sins. But it is not possible to know these things, unless by a special confession of the sinner."

with maidenly purity or matronly virtue, not a whisper of complaint can be uttered to those whose interest and obligation it is to afford protection. "Secrecy should be strictly observed," says the Catechism of Trent, "as well by penitent as by priest; and hence, because in such circumstances secrecy must be insecure, no one can, on any account, confess by messenger or letter."¹ Judging from the teaching of some of your divines, no female is safe.² Moral character is not necessary. The priest may be sensual and wicked, in any way, but his fitness for the confessional is not abated. As a priest he could not do wrong; but as a man he might wallow in all vice, and luxuriate in all the misery he might inflict upon his unhappy victim. Where the functions of the priest terminate in these matters, and those of the man begin, I cannot say; but the peril is fearful, and awful have been the scenes which have marked and followed this abominable practice.

Of the tendency of these things, I need not remind you. It must be obvious to the most thoughtless. National interests are frequently perilled by it. The councils of monarchs have been not only influenced but controlled by the voice of confessors, and millions have suffered by the surrender of royal consciences to their control. Life and property are frequently endangered by it. The peace, the social well-being and happiness, of a family are invaded, and the priest is conversant, or may be at any time, with the whole of its affairs, and, through

(1) The reader will find abundant proof of the fearful extent to which this is enjoined in Dens, vol. vi. Lignori, vi.; or, as more ready of access, he may consult the Confessional Unmasked, where the original is given. The following may be taken as a specimen from Dens:—"A confessor should assert his ignorance of the truth, which he knows only by sacramental confession, and confirm his assertion, if necessary, by oaths. Such facts he is to conceal, though the life or safety of a man, or the destruction of a state, depend upon the disclosure." "The confessor," he says, "is questioned, and answers as a man. This truth, however, he knows not as man, but as God, and therefore he is not guilty of falsehood or perjury."—Vol. vi., p. 219. Apud Taylor, p. 112.

(2) Let the reader gravely ponder the following:—"It follows that it will be lawful for a clergyman or a monk to kill a slanderer, who threatens to publish some great crime against him or his order, if he have no other means to defend himself therefrom." "This doctrine, indeed, is probable, and a monk may kill a woman with whom he hath sinned, for fear she should defame him."—Morals of the Jesuits, p. 313.

the confessional, can control them at his pleasure. Before it mind must bow. It can trace all its wanderings, check its loftiest aspirations, interdict its intercourse with others, and confine it to the course which the spiritual powers shall prefer. But how appalling must be the influence of such a system upon man's moral nature. Upon virtue and holiness it falls like the scorching lightning. It leaves the form of piety, but its life and blood are gone. All history shows its blighting effects both upon the confessor and the penitent. Even Rome has been roused again and again; mandates have issued from the Vatican, denouncing the enormous evils which have resulted from it. Appalling they must have been, for every evil utters its last wail to heaven, before the Vicar of Christ, the representative of immaculate purity, manifests his love of holiness by denouncing crime. "Persons deputed to hear the confession of penitents, have broken out into such heinous acts of iniquity, as to abuse the sacrament of penance in the very act of hearing the confession, not fearing to injure the same sacrament, and him who instituted it, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, by enticing and provoking, or trying to entice and provoke, females to lewd actions, at the very time when they were making their confession." So wrote Paul IV. when in his bull he denounced these gross immoralities. Similar documents were issued by Gregory XV., Benedict XIV., and a second time by the latter Pontiff, in 1745, enforcing the enactment of his former bulls, and those of his predecessors. But nothing can cure the evil.¹

Permit me, Sir, just to add, that however revolting these things might be to a sensitive mind, that you have no alternative. Auricular Confession is linked with other fundamental dogmas of the system so closely, that to decline it would involve, of necessity, a separation from Rome.

(1) "A confessor cannot absolve or pardon a female penitent," says Dens, "who has been his accomplice in crime, except in the article of death. But then he can pardon at this solemn hour, though till that period he may have lived in sin." I ask any intelligent reader whether this is not giving the most ample license to sin which man can desire? No barrier could stand against this! Men may wallow in pollution through life, and at death be entirely absolved from it!

Nothing can be more compulsory. There can be no avoidance of the disgusting process. The attempt would place the mind of a sincere and truthful individual in the most appalling situation. There could be no pardon; in a word, no participation in any of those religious services which are supposed to secure and sustain spiritual life. Beyond this, I believe, in this land, your priests could not, or perhaps more accurately, dare not go. Public opinion is still powerful. Civil law yet is in the ascendant. The rights of citizenship are still secured to us, and no spiritual power can yet touch them. No thanks to the hierarchy for this. We have seen that in other lands it is not so. I have already adduced evidence to show its working in Rome itself. I give you another example:—

“If any trueborn Italian,—man, woman, or child,—within the Pope’s dominions, does not confess, and receive the communion, at least once a-year, before Easter, his name is posted up in the parish church; if he still refrain, he is exhorted, entreated, and otherwise tormented; and if he persist in his contumacy, he is excommunicated, which is a very good joke to us, but none at all to an Italian, since it involves the loss of civil rights, and perhaps of liberty and property.”¹ If it could, I repeat, it would do the same here. Consistency demands it. Weaken our Protestant influence, give full play to the powers of the priesthood, and not a fair daughter of our land but would have to bow down before the confessor, salute his cheek in the gloom of the confessional, and with her warm breath playing upon his face, unbosom her inmost thoughts to his view, on peril of eternal misery.

It is time now that we turn from this painful exhibition to examine the grounds upon which this practice is based. Most of your writers—and, in many cases, one is only the echo of the other—the Fathers of Trent, for example, boldly avow that it is in harmony with Scripture, and the practice of the primitive church. Let us test this affirmation, and see how much truth it contains.

All error on religion, more or less, must be pervaded with some sediment of truth. If it is not, to some extent, the shadow of the reality, it will bear some approximation

(1) Rome in the Nineteenth Century, ii. p. 262; also, iii. p. 160.

to it. Its success depends upon this. Without this, the master spirit of deceit would defeat his own ends. He transforms himself into an angel of light. Through certain agencies he can make men believe that vice is virtue, and sin holiness; that an immoral man may be a holy pope, and the vicar of Christ; and that an ungodly and sensual priest can forgive sins.¹ That the whole theory of Rome is based upon this, I have no more doubt than I am penning this sentence, and I will try to make it manifest. Now, the most prominent characteristic of Romanism is its priestly element. This is the core of the system. It pervades your whole theory. It is the uniting-link between the present and the future; or, as your friends say, it is the living representation of God upon earth. Destroy this, and your system would lose all its cohesive properties and crumble to dust. Without this, it would be weak as any other form of error and deceit. Upon this dogma, the efficacy of your ministry, your mass, your indulgence, your forgiveness of sin, and all your spiritual functions depend. I am prepared, then, to admit, that the New Testament inculcates the doctrine of a christian priesthood, and teaches most explicitly the duty of confession. I make this concession without any reserve. I mean not the unchanged and unchangeable priesthood of the Redeemer, by which he ever lives to intercede for us; but another which he confers, in the plenitude of his grace, upon his church. I state this with the fullest conviction that yours is only the shadow of it, and not the reality; the form, and not the living power. The christian priesthood is the common birthright of all Christ's disciples; yours a hierarchy and a usurpation. The duties of the one are inseparable from an intelligent and personal appreciation of the religion of Christ; yours confine all spiritual duties, all holy and acceptable sacri-

(1) "Should the Pope enjoin the practice of vice, and prevent the observance of virtue, the church is bound to believe that *vice* is *virtue*, and virtue vice, under pain of mortal sin."—Dixon's Evidence in Append. to Eighth Report of the Commissioners. Hardy's Ireland in 1846-47, p. 38. One of Loyola's rules is in these terms: "If authority declares that what seems to you white is black, affirm it to be black."—Spiritual Exercise, p. 291. Michelet's Jesuits, p. 71.

fice, to a man who may have only an official right, but be entirely destitute of every moral feeling which would enable him to worship God in spirit and in truth. Nothing appears to me more clear, more certain, than that the religion of Christ recognises a community of brethren, with equal rights, and equal freedom of access to the throne of grace. The church is a brotherhood, a family, and one body, of which Christ is the head. The Judaising element you have incorporated with your system destroys this; and the principles, whether as developed in the various branches of Methodism, Church of Englandism, or, worst of all, Romanism, have been productive of incalculable mischief to the true church of Christ. The distinction of clergy and laity proclaims a robbery upon the latter. In the language of the New Testament, the whole church is God's clergy. Bishop Kaye, no suspected witness in this matter, says, "The distinction of the clergy from the laity, and of orders among the clergy, arose out of the necessities of that frail compound, spiritual and sensual—*human nature*, not out of any designed imitation of the Mosaic institution. After it had been once established, we might naturally expect to find the language of the Old Testament, respecting the Jewish priesthood, applied to the Christian; at first only in the way of analogy, but subsequently, perhaps, *to promote the interested views of ambitious men.*"¹ How explicitly does he whom you delight to recognise as the founder of your Church speak upon the priestly character of all true christians, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."² "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house,

(1) Bishop Kaye's Tertullian, p. 18. Whatever might be the origin of these distinctions, it is evident to all acquainted with patristic writings, that they were, by Jerome, Chrysostom, and others, vindicated on this ground alone. The opinion of the former is a fair sample of the rest. "And that we may know the apostolic traditions to have been drawn from the Old Testament, that which Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, the same lot, the bishops, and presbyters, and the deacons, claim to themselves in the church."

(2) 1 Peter ii. 9.

a holy priesthood, *to offer up spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus."¹ Nor is the apostle John less explicit upon this matter, "Now unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us *kings* and *priests* unto God and his Father."² The same doctrine is taught by Paul: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye *present your bodies a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."³ "By him therefore (*i. e.*, the Saviour) let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."⁴ I will only add that, in one place or other, every characteristic of the priestly work is attributed to all christians. Indeed, I wonder how any man can read the New Testament and remain in ignorance. The essence of the religion it inculcates of necessity involves an act of sacrifice which no priest can perform for another: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."⁵ The whole church is a priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices through the one atonement offered upon the cross for the sins of the guilty. In your pretensions, you only cling to the shadow of the Aaronic priesthood, which our great High Priest hath for ever abolished; but, in doing this, you trample upon the rights of the whole church, and rob the disciples of the Redeemer of their high privilege—"of coming with boldness to the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help them in time of need." You seek, through a priest, what apostles tell us invariably to seek from Christ alone.

Moreover, no man can be familiar with the writings of the New Testament, without being struck with the marked contrast between the manner in which the apostles speak of themselves, and address the guilty who approach them,

(1) 1 Peter ii. 5.

(2) Rev. i. 5, 6.

(3) Rom. xii. 1.

(4) Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

(5) Psalm li. 17.

and the lofty assumptions and extraordinary dealings we have seen manifested in the confessional. You cannot, from these holy records, discover the shadow of resemblance. On other grounds you may defend it, but not on that of Scripture. Multiplied examples occur in which the apostles had to do with the guilty; in which penitents sought forgiveness, and the wicked, with all the intenseness of feeling which deep conviction of the aggravated nature of their guilt would inspire, asked what they might do to be saved; but we find no confession to a priest urged. The murderers of the Saviour were exhorted to repent and be baptized every one of them;¹ not to go to the confessional. The jailor was told simply to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he should be saved;² not to go to the confessional. Simon Magus, that great heretic, yet one of the most valuable friends you have had, heard from the lips of your boasted head, "Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee;"³ he was not told to go to the confessional. In no case, in the many which are recorded, do we find these men deviating from this course. Yet they were exercising the power of the keys in all these cases. They were binding and loosing. Infallibly proclaiming to men the only ground upon which sin could be pardoned and salvation secured. But what a contrast is all this to the confessional! How simple! How intelligible! How easy to be understood! The fact is, it was religion as it came from the mind of its immaculate Author, not as mangled and disfigured by the manipulations of a priesthood, who have exhibited in its stead, a compound of Judaism, Heathenism, and Christianity,⁴ and in the confessional, and especially at the altar, proclaimed it as the religion of Christ.

I have intimated that the duty of confession is not only recognised in Holy Scripture, but urged upon our attention by the apostles as essential to salvation and

(1) Acts ii. 38.

(2) Acts xvi. 31.

(3) Acts viii. 22.

(4) See Middleton's Letter from Rome. Poynder's Popery in Alliance with Heathenism, &c., 1835.

peace. We are urged to confess our sins to God. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."¹ David also teaches the same truth, and records its efficacy. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."² More than this, we are commanded to confess to men. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."³ "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."⁴ Such was apostolic confession. Not a shadow of resemblance can you trace in it, or in the whole of New Testament teaching upon this subject, to Auricular Confession. In the former we recognise an important principle, pre-eminently adapted to the church of Christ as a holy brotherhood, pervaded and influenced by the spirit of love. It could only sustain its fraternal union, and give vitality to its fellowship, by the maintenance of this principle. Hence, if from any cause or by any means offence should arise, acknowledgment became the imperative duty. Each one felt the importance of "*forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake had forgiven them.*" And when true piety is felt, it will never need the coercive and polluting details of your confessional to produce this result.

Nor is the other ground upon which the Fathers of Trent place this dogma more truthful; I mean the practice of the universal church. We have seen that in apostolic times it had no existence, and I have seen no proof that it existed in the times which immediately follow them. I repeat, that I attach no importance to this, but simply mention it as a fact. The opinions of Fathers are

(1) 1 John i. 9.

(2) Psalm xxxii. 5.

(3) James v. 16.

(4) Matthew v. 23, 24. The reader will easily call to mind a multitude of other passages teaching the same truth; for example, Matthew vi. 14, 15; *Ibid*, xviii. 28—35; *Ibid*, xviii. 21; Luke xvii. 3; Eph. iv. 32; Col. iii. 13, &c.

of value to me just in proportion as they accord with those of inspired men; the moment they indulge in fancies, and teach differently to Paul, Peter, and Christ, I leave them without alarm, and certainly without doubt. But it may be affirmed, I believe, without fear of contradiction, that in the writings of the earliest and best of them, Auricular Confession has no standing-place. It is in subsequent ages, when ignorance and superstition had multiplied their triumphs, that we must look for this.¹ Clement, though writing to the Corinthians to heal a schism in the church there, yet says nothing about it.² The same may be said of Ignatius, notwithstanding his episcopal tendencies, of Barnabas, Polycarp, and Hermes. In Cyril's Lectures, now before me, I can find nothing like Auricular Confession, but much to the contrary.³ It is the same with Cyprian⁴ and Chrysostom.⁵ From this last Father I may quote an example of the doctrine taught, in the main, by these illustrious men. "It is not necessary that thou shouldst confess before witnesses. Let the enquiry of thy offence be made in thy thought; let this judgment be without a witness; let God only see thee confessing." "Confess them before God; confess thy sins before the Judge; praying, if not with thy tongue, yet at least with thy memory; and so look to obtain mercy." "But thou art ashamed to say that thou hast sinned? Confess thy faults then daily in thy prayers. For do I say, Confess them to thy fellow-servant, who may reproach thee therewith? Confess them to God who healeth them." "What have I to do with men," says Augustine, "that they should hear my confessions, as though they should heal all my diseases!"⁶

(1) Fleury's Man. of Christians.

(2) Clement, 1 Ep. Corin., p. 51. "Let us, therefore," he says, "as many as have transgressed by any suggestions of the adversary, beg God's forgiveness."—Wake's Tran., p. 87.

(3) Lect. ii. Newman's Lib. of the Fathers.

(4) Newman's Lib. of the Fathers, iii. Tracts of Cyprian, p. 196.

(5) *Ibid*, Chrys. Rom. Corinthians, p. 316.

(6) Abp. Usher's Answer to the Challenge of a Jesuit, p. 87. The learned author adduces examples also from Hilary, Ambrose, Basil, &c. The reader may find also various in Bp. Taylor's Dissuaves, and Bp. Luscombe's Church of Rome, &c.

Already I have far exceeded the space allotted for this letter; I will only therefore add, that a volume which has done good service to the hierarchy, and which professes to have been written by the apostles, though by some critics attributed to the third or fourth century,—I mean the Apostolic Constitutions, the second book, devoted to discipline,—contains not a word that can be construed to favour Auricular Confession.¹ It favours a hierarchy fully, but not this feature of it at all. Confession was long in reaching the awful eminence it has now obtained. Your own Fleury has traced this progress, and shown the various stages through which it passed, from the simple and intelligent teachings of Holy Scripture, to that which is at present a disgrace to humanity.² How long will you submit to it? How long will you suffer your wives and daughters thus to be oppressed and degraded? For myself, I never see a Roman Catholic lady, but from my heart I pity her. It is so wanton, so novel, so unscriptural, that I wonder men with any intelligence or self-respect, should tamely submit to this ever fearful exercise of despotic power, and place in the hands of any man an instrument which may be used with such fearful oppression!

(1) Whiston's *P. Christianity*. A. Consti., book ii.

(2) Fleury, *Disser.* apud Jortin, iii., p. 295. The reader may also consult upon this subject, Hagenbach's *Hist. of Christian Doctrine*, i., p. 180; also, Neander's and Gieseler's *Histories*. Sir P. King's *P. Church*, chap. vii., contains a graphic sketch. Bingham supplies more details.

LETTER IV.

THE WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

Johnson somewhere says, that names are intended to designate things. No one can doubt that this should always be the case. Its importance is evident. The want of this is productive of evil; long and loud have been the complaints of your brethren in this matter, from the application of names to them by us, which they repudiate. Against the term "Papist," we have had bursts of holy indignation; "Romanist" is equally distasteful; and to the term "Catholic," you can have no well-grounded claim, as a part can never be the whole. I wish we could use one which would meet the wishes of both parties, and which should be just and full in its description of the prominent characteristics of your mingled system, and at the same time be without offence to you. Will you pardon the liberty? but the subject of this letter suggests one. I think *Marians* would suit both. It would be just, it would be full, it would be distinctive, as to your own practices, and would involve no sacrifice of principle on ours. We could use, and you could recognise it, without hesitancy.

No one can doubt the prominency of the Virgin in your system. She occupies, confessedly, a more conspicuous place than either the Father or the Son. Her altars are more numerous, her worshippers more multitudinous, her intercession more frequently desired, her influence more potent in the celestial world, and her bounty to her votaries more signal and impressive, than all others combined. Equal with her Son in heaven,—nay, in many respects his superior, for she commands him,—the object of your church has been to give her

the highest place in your worship and affection on earth. Piety has embalmed her; superstition has invested her with all the attributes of the Paphian goddess,—

“ Her hundred altars then with garlands crowned,
And richest incense smoking breathed around
Sweet odour,”—

or the *Bona Dea*¹ of Pagan mythology; whilst the loftiest geniuses have exhausted themselves in Madonnas in all conceivable circumstances. Not here, but in States where your influence is paramount, she meets you everywhere. From the black Proserpine-like Madonna of Loretta, to the most exquisite gems of the chisel and the pencil, she is receiving the homage of all classes in the Marian church. Around her altars all sympathies gather, upon her all-powerful intercession all hopes are centered, and in her temples the clouds of incense ascend with greater value and more frequency than to the only living and true God. The monk, in the unbroken solitudes of the wilderness,—the semi-savage, as he roams in the vast wilds of the South American continent,—the courtesan, in the polished circles of European life,—the banditti, as in the midnight darkness he lurks in the defiles and ruins of sunny Italy for the unprotected traveller,—and the lordly Pontiff, in his more regal state than the primitive fishermen of Galilee,—chant her litanies, and implore her protection. In all countries where the Papal power is recognised, and the votaries of Marianism are found, she is the Alpha and the Omega of their aspirations, and receives from them the profoundest homage.

But though enjoying by far a larger share of affection, and adoration too, than any other in the whole circle of your calendar, still she is the servant of all. Her engagements are incalculable, her labours overwhelming. None but the mother of Deity could undertake them. No attributes but those of Deity are sufficient for them. Her aid is invoked on all occasions, and sometimes for the most ridiculous, absurd, and revolting purposes. A Loyola is indebted to her inspiration for his celebrated

(1) Middleton's Letter, pp. 15, 36.

spiritual exercises,¹ and a savage bull-fighter places her image around his neck as a protection from the mad attacks of a not more savage beast.² The Spanish soldier feels her image a safeguard on the battle-field, and the Italian robber plunders under her protection.³ "The Virgin of Ona," says Mr. Ford, "destroys worms in children, and her sash at Tortosa delivers Royal Infantas." In one temple she acts as "the Virgin of barren women," and in another as "the Virgin of barren ladies." In the one case she extends her aid to the poor, and in the other she befriends the more affluent. Her precious influence, in both, depends upon the gifts of her votaries.⁴ "At one time she comes down from heaven to support an arch-thief on the gallows who was hanged for his rogueries, but was withal a great devotee of hers; at another, she comes down to darn Thomas of Canterbury's coat, which happened to be torn upon the shoulder; then she is at the pains of wiping away the sweat from the faces of the monks of Clairvaux whilst they are at work; at another time she discharges the duty of a certain abbess, who was rambling up and down the country with a monk who had debauched her; she sings matins for a monk who had asked her to supply his place; and they even make her come down to let a young fellow blood."⁵ One day she aids a little girl who is falling from a house, because she cries, "Mary, help me." At another, the devil makes a child fall from a ladder, and cut off her finger with a knife, when the Virgin appears visibly to her, and puts

(1) Michelet's *Jesuits*, p. 89.

(2) Ford's *Gatherings from Spain*, p. 241.

(3) "All the Italian banditti," says Mr. Ford, "always wear a small silver image of the Madonna:" and Jose Maria, a great rascal in Spain, attributed his escapes from the felon's doom to an image of the Virgin of Griefs of Cordova. "The rosary of the Virgin is common to all Spain. The following proof of its miraculous virtues was frequently painted in the convents. A robber was shot by a traveller and buried; his comrades some time afterwards passing by heard his voice,—'this fellow in the cellarage;'—they opened the grave, and found him alive and unhurt; for when he was killed he had happened to have a rosary round his neck, and St. Dominic (its founder) was enabled to intercede with the Virgin on his behalf."—*Gatherings from Spain*. Thus she is made the mistress of sin!

(4) Ford's *Gatherings from Spain*.

(5) Hone's *Ancient Mysteries*, p. 116.

it on again. Two boys, one day, were taking their pleasure in a boat, when, from a sudden squall, it upset; the Virgin saved one, but refused the entreaties of the other, because he had not honoured her that day. Sometimes she comes from heaven to teach young maidens dress-making, and, after witnessing the success of her instructions, returns again to her throne. At another time she appeared to a wicked man who had given himself to the devil, when the good Mary, in answer to his earnest cries, brought him the agreement from Satan, in which he had consigned body and soul to his care. Her exploits of this kind are numberless. A wicked man, but who retained some devotion to Mary, and recited the holy rosary occasionally, approached the hour of his death. He was filled with terrible alarm, for he saw a troop of devils waiting for him. To soothe his mind, the Mother of mercy appeared to him, and bade the archangel St. Michael put into one scale the acts of homage done to honour her, and into the other the sins of his past life, now confessed, and, since the former outweighed those, the devils fled, and the soul was led by the most Holy Mother into Paradise.¹ Sometimes she descends into monastic cells, to allow her favourites to draw nourishment from her own breasts;² at other times to signify her pleasure that a chapel should be built to her honour.³ An instance or two, more specific still, may not be unacceptable to the reader.

"Queen Isabella invaded it (a Moorish castle) with a great army; but the king looked down from his castle among the clouds and laughed her to scorn. Upon this the Virgin appeared to the queen, and guided her and her army up a mysterious path in the mountains which had never before been known. When the Moor saw her coming, he was astonished, and springing upon his horse from a precipice, was dashed to pieces! The marks of his horse's hoofs are to be seen in the margin of the rock to this day!"⁴

(1) Most of these are taken from the "Month of Mary," a popular devotional work in this country.

(2) *Miraculous Host*, p. 30. Apud Hone, p. 155.

(3) Dickens in his *Italy*, tells a tale of one, p. 63.

(4) Irving's *Alhambra*, ii, p. 11.

St. Liguori was a devout admirer of the Virgin, and, amongst many wonderful achievements of her Ladyship, tells the following :—

“ One day, a wicked, blood-stained man, who had despised the entreaties of his wife to recite an ‘ Ave Maria,’ entered a church, and saw an image of Mary, and, without much devotion, he said an ‘ Ave Maria.’ As he drew back, he perceived that the infant Jesus, who was in the arms of his Holy Mother, was wounded all over, and bathed in blood ; he said to the Virgin, ‘ *Who has ill-treated your Son so?*’ ‘ *You,*’ replied she, ‘ *with your sins have wounded the Son of God and my Son.*’ At these words the man wept, and prayed the Virgin, with many sobs, to obtain his pardon. The holy infant for some time refused to listen, but, overcome by her entreaties, Jesus said, ‘ But what can be denied to Mary?’ She said then, ‘ *Kiss the wounds of my Son.*’ The man, all trembling, and with many tears, approached to kiss them, and the wounds were healed by his contrition.”¹

We may take one other specimen from Hallam :—

“ There was a man whose occupation was highway robbery ; but whenever he set out on any such expedition, he was careful to address a prayer to the Virgin. Taken at last, he was sentenced to be hanged. While the cord was round his neck, he made his usual prayer ; nor was it ineffectual. The Virgin supported his feet ‘ with her white hands,’ and thus kept him alive two days, to the no small surprise of the executioner, who attempted to complete his work with the stroke of a sword. But the same invisible hand turned away the weapon, and the executioner was compelled to release his victim, acknowledging the miracle.”²

Upon this aspect of Marianism we could say much more, but we forbear.

The same power which she personally exerts, when necessary she gives to her images and relics. Many of these exist in different localities. Some are heaven-born, many of them are of wondrous celebrity and power, and all of them claim, and unhappily receive, the adoration of the faithful.

“ The palladium of the city of Tortosa is the *cintra* or girdle which the Virgin, accompanied by St. Peter and St. Paul, brought herself from heaven to a priest in the cathedral, in 1178 ; an event in honour of which a mass is still said every second Sunday in Advent. The gracious gift was declared authentic, in 1617, by Paul the Fifth, and,

(1) *Glories of Mary*, p. 87. Taylor gives it somewhat varied, p. 264.

(2) *Middle Ages*, c. ix.

to justify his infallibility, it works every sort of miracle, especially in obstetric cases. . . . This girdle, more wonderful than the cestus of Venus, was conveyed, in 1822, by Ferdinand the Seventh's command, in solemn procession to Aranjuez, in order to facilitate the accouchement of the two Infantas; and as Lucina, when duly invoked, favoured women in travail, so their Royal Highnesses were happily delivered, and one of the babes then born is the husband of Isabella the Second."¹

The Virgin of Pilar is, if possible, more potent and valuable, in its way, than the girdle of Tortosa, just as the whole is superior to a part. Its history is this. St. James and seven of his converts were one night reposing on the banks of the Ebro near Saragosa, when they were suddenly aroused by celestial melody, and, looking up, saw angels descending from heaven, with an image on a pillar. These spiritual visitors told him the image should be the defence of the city. It was formed, two years after the Virgin's death, by angels, who must be admirable sculptors, for it was a perfect likeness of the Virgin. She, woman-like, flattered with its beauty, ordered it to be carried in a procession all round heaven by the principal angels, the Heavenly Host following, afterwards the Trinity, with Mary in the middle.² When she had been sufficiently gratified by this homage, she despatched it to James, who placed it in the city, where it acted as the defender of its inhabitants, and on one occasion slew in a single night 50,000 Saracens.³

One cannot forget another tradition kindred to this, and much of the same sort, but much earlier, equally authentic, for all the priests could affirm it, and as cordially believed by the populace, and, I have little doubt, quite as useful, as her Ladyship of Pilar. It is recorded by Luke, Acts xix. 34, 35.

There is another picture of the Virgin:—

"I allude to a picture of the Virgin in the chapel under St. Peter's, with an inscription that it had miraculously shed blood when struck with a stone; and another picture of the Virgin at Avezzo, which

(1) Ford's *Gatherings from Spain*, pp. 241—2.

(2) The reader will not fail to mark the awful impiety of this sentence, in representing Deity as three Gods.

(3) Gavins's *Master Key to Popery*, p. 235.

miraculously shed tears of grief at hearing the profane language of some drunkards; and another picture of her which was shown at Rome, which miraculously wept before the whole congregation, at the invasion of the French. And more strange than all, a picture of the Virgin and Child at Lucca, of which it was affirmed, that when some one flung a stone at the face of the child, she most wonderfully transferred the child to the other arm, and thus saved it from injury—a wonder, indeed, for a mere picture to perform.”¹

I just give one more, in which the legend referred to by Seymour is more fully detailed:—

“In a church at Lucca is the image of the Virgin and Child, of which it is related, that an infidel threw a stone at the infant, but the Virgin, to save him from the blow, shifted him from one arm to the other, while the reprobate was swallowed up; and the hole is shown, just before the altar of the image, enclosed by a grate. The Virgin received the blow on her shoulder, whence the blood issued, which is preserved in a bottle, and shown with the greatest ceremony by the priest in his vestments, with taper lighted, while all embrace the sacred relic on their knees.”²

It would be endless to dwell upon her weeping, bleeding, speaking, and blinking figures; the quantity of her milk preserved in bottles; the preservation of her hair and linen, &c.; her frequent visions to young, beautiful, and impassioned ladies, promising them her Son as their husband, if they would only live a life of celibacy;³ her interposition in calming tempests; her removing pestilences, when vows and prayer to all the saints in the calendar had failed;⁴ and, lastly, the extraordinary efficacy of prayer, when addressed to this “Queen of Heaven.”⁵—upon these, and kindred fables, you know it

(1) Seymour's Mornings with the Jesuits, p. 96.

(2) Wright's Travels, Bap. Mag., 1818. The reader will find other instances in the Glories of Mary. Liguori's *Salva Regina*. Dr. Achilli, p. 244.

(3) Mrs. Jameson's Sacred and Legendary Art, vol. ii., p. 82. Horne's Mariolatry, p. 26.

(4) In the time of Gregory the Great, Rome was thus saved, by the picture of the Virgin, painted by Luke, being carried in procession through the city. An angel was immediately seen shaking his bloody sabre over St. Angelo, and the castle has been honoured by that name ever since. A similar miracle occurred at Rennes, in 1632. A dreadful plague ravaged the town, but upon the promise of a picture by the town to the Virgin, she ordered the angel to sheath his sword, and the city was filled with unbounded joy.—Visits to the Shrines of our Lady, pp. 21—2.

(5) In the Salisbury Missal of 1344, there is a prayer with a preface, stating that Pope Alexander the Sixth granted to all that said it devoutly in the worship of St. Ann, and our Lady, and her Son, ten thousand years of pardon for deadly sins,” &c.—Hone's Mysteries, p. 113. An easy relief from misery this!

would be an easy task to fill a volume; but enough has been said upon this, and I turn to another aspect of this affecting subject.

Far be it from me unnecessarily to offend, but I should belie my deep convictions were I to hesitate to say, that in my opinion you render to this good woman the worship which is only due to God. I know your distinctions, but they are only specious and deceptive. With the mass of the people they can have no weight. No man, I think, can impartially reflect upon the nature of the worship you pay, the blessings you invoke, the powers with which you invest her Ladyship, without feeling that the charge of idolatry is clear. To doubt it appears to me to place in doubt the existence of idolatry altogether. To question this would be to question the worship of idols at all times and everywhere. Let me implore your attention for a moment to some examples, from a multitude, as illustrative of the worship and adoration offered to this celestial Goddess. I take my first from the Tridentine Fathers:—

“Moreover, let them teach that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of other saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and due honour and veneration rendered to them. Not that it is believed that any divinity or power resides in them, on account of which they are worshipped, or that any benefit is to be sought from them, or any confidence placed in images, as was formerly by the Gentiles, who fixed their hope in idols. But the honour with which they are regarded is referred to those who are represented by them.”¹

Differing little from this is the Creed of Pius the Fourth:—“I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, and of the Mother of God, ever a Virgin, and also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them.”

These merely assert a dogma. They leave me in the dark as to the nature of that “honour and veneration” you are to render to them. I must look for it elsewhere.

(1) Cramp's Text Book. I should like to see a proof that any intelligent Pagan “believed that any divinity or power resided in his idols.” Universally they were regarded only as images, not realities.

I can only gather it from your authorised teaching, and I seek for information, therefore, from your devotional and expository works. I am shut up to this course. I select the following then from the Rhemish Testament:—

“Most holy and antient Ephrem, also, in a special oration made in praise of our Lady, saith thus in divers places: ‘Mother of God undefiled, Queen of all, the Hope of them that despair, my Lady most glorious, higher than the heavenly spirits, more honourable than the cherubim, holier than the seraphim, and, without comparison, more glorious than the supernatural hosts; the hope of the Fathers, the glory of the Prophets, the praise of the Apostles.’” “And St. Augustine or (as some think) St. Fulgentius: ‘Oh, blessed Marie, who can be able worthily to praise or thank thee? Receive our praises, obtain us our requests, for thou art the special hope of sinners; by thee we hope for pardon of our sins; and in thee, O most blessed, is the expectation of our reward.’”¹

“No Catholic,” says a French Abbé, “need be told that it is ordinarily impossible to love our blessed Saviour as we ought, without at the same time having a most intense devotion to the blessed Virgin. The one naturally flows from the other.”²

“By this august quality of the Divine Maternity, Mary is elevated,” says St. Thomas, “to a term of infinite perfection; it is the first measure of her greatness. By that she approaches nearest to God, and to the hypostatic union; so that she is, as says St. Ildephonsus, the likeliest image of the Divine paternity, and furnishes us with a more just expression of the incomprehensible generation of the Divine Word.”³

From Visits to the Holy Sacrament I select the following, from many others:—

“St. Germanus, addressing the most Holy Virgin, says, ‘No one can be saved unless through thee; no one can be freed from evil unless through thee; no one can obtain a gift unless through thee; therefore, most blessed Lady, my Hope, if thou help me not, I am lost, and shall never be able to bless thee in heaven. But I hear all the saints declare that thou dost never abandon those who have recourse to thee; they alone are lost who do not turn to thee. I, then, wretched creature as I am, have recourse to thee, and in thee place all my hope.’”⁴

“Most blessed Lady, thou didst say to St. Bridget, ‘However much a man may sin, if he turn to me, with a true desire of amendment, I

(1) Capper’s Doctrine of the Church of Rome, p. 462. Note in Rhemish Version. The reader will do well to consult Fulke’s exposure of this note in his reply to the annotators. Their quotations are never to be trusted.

(2) Oratory of the Faithful Soul, from the French of Ven. A. Blossius, p. 4.

(3) Month of the Nativity, p. 20.

(4) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, p. 41.

am immediately ready to receive him on his return; nor do I consider how much he may have sinned, but with what will he return. I disdain not to anoint and heal his wounds, because I am called, and truly am, the Mother of Mercy.'"¹

After reading such cant and rank blasphemy as this, we cease to wonder that the Bible is only read by permission; for no man familiar with its doctrine and imbued with its spirit, could fail to perceive that teaching of this kind makes even God a liar. "It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

In most of your devotional works the following will be found. It is used by the faithful everywhere; and, doubtless, by its wordiness and lucidity must convey to the mind of the ignorant peasant, as he rolls out the verbiage, the most lofty conceptions of the pure and immaculate one.

The Litany of our Blessed Lady of Loretto, &c. :—

"We fly to thy patronage, O sacred Mother of God; despise not our prayers in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger, O our glorious and blessed Virgin.

"Lord, have mercy upon us, &c.

"Holy Mary, pray for us.

"Holy Mother of God, hear us, &c.

"Holy Virgin of Virgins, hear us, &c.

"Mother of Christ, Mother of divine grace, hear us. Lord Jesus, hear us. Mother most pure, pray for us. Mother most chaste, Mother most undefiled, Mother untouched, Mother most amiable, Mother most admirable, Mother of our Creator, (!) Mother of our Redeemer, pray for us. Virgin most prudent, Virgin most venerable, Virgin most renowned, Virgin most powerful, Virgin most merciful, Virgin most faithful, pray for us. Mirror of Justice, Seal of Wisdom, Cause of our Joy, Spiritual Vessel, Vessel of Honour, Vessel of singular Devotion, Mystical Rose, Tower of David, Tower of Ivory, House of Gold, Ark of the Covenant, Gate of Heaven, Morning Star, Health of the Weak, Refuge of Sinners, Comfort of the Afflicted, Help of Christians, pray for us. Queen of Angels, Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Apostles, Queen of Martyrs, Queen of Confessors, Queen of Virgins, Queen of Saints, pray for us." &c.²

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to have another specimen. It is called, "The Litany of the Sacred

(1) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, p. 46. For other examples the reader may consult pp. 80, 314—319.

(2) Key of Heaven, pp. 221, 222. Garden of the Soul, pp. 326—328.

Heart of Mary." We omit an introductory sentence or two, as similar to those in the one just given.

- "Heart of Mary, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, pleasing to the Heart of God, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, united to the Heart of Christ, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Organ of the Holy Ghost, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Sanctuary of the Most Holy Trinity, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Tabernacle of the Word Incarnate, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, unstained with Original Sin, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, full of Grace, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, blessed among all Hearts, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Throne of Glory, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Abyss of Humility, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Holocaust of Divine Love, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, attached with Christ to the Cross, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Comfort of the Afflicted, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Refuge of Sinners, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Hope of the Agonising, pray for us.
- "Heart of Mary, Seat of Mercy, pray for us."¹

So late as 1822, the then reigning Pontiff, Pius the Seventh, issued the following prayer, and commanded it to be used by the Roman citizens. Its phraseology demands your attention. It cannot be mistaken. The "Daughter of the Eternal Father," must be a goddess; the "Spouse of the Holy Ghost," must be the lady and patroness of the universe, receiving from you "infinite glory." And all this to a poor but good woman, and nothing more!

"I adore thee, most Holy Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Lady and Patroness of the Universe, as Daughter of the Eternal Father, Mother of his most beloved Son, and most gracious Spouse of the Holy Ghost: and, prostrate at the feet of thy great Majesty, with all possible humility, I supplicate thee by that divine love with which thou wast filled on thy ascension into heaven, to grant me grace and mercy, to receive me under thy protection, and to number me among thy most happy and joyful servants, whom thou bearest engraven on thy most virgin bosom. Vouchsafe, O most merciful Mother and Lady, to receive this miserable and impure heart; take my memory, my will, and all my other faculties and senses, both internal and external; accept my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my hands, my feet; rule them, and make them conform to thy good pleasure, and of thy sweet Son, intending at every movement of them to give thee infinite glory."²

(1) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, &c., p. 332. The same Litany, but with considerable variation, occurs in the Ursuline Manual, p. 400.

(2) Bishop Luscombe's Church of Rome, &c., p. 93.

In a work very popular just now, styled, "*The Confraternity of the immaculate Heart of Mary for the Conversion of Sinners*," the members are directed, after mass, to present the following prayer:—

"O Holy Mother, look down from heaven with protecting love on thy children, gathered together at the foot of thy altars. With sentiments of veneration, love, and confidence, we honour thy holy and immaculate heart. In *union* with it, we adore the Holy Trinity, and the divine heart of Jesus, and implore, in the name of our Confraternity, through thy all-powerful intercession with God, the grace of our own conversion, and that of all sinners. O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

In the same work occurs another:—

"Remember, O most pious Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that any one was ever rejected who had recourse to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy patronage. Animated with the like confidence, I cast myself at thy feet, humbly deploring my sins, and beseeching thee to adopt me for thy child, and to take upon thee the care of my eternal salvation. Despise not, Mother of the Divine Word, my petition, but graciously hear and grant it. Hail, Mary!" &c.

Of St. Liguori it is said,—

"That which most of all contributed to preserve his innocence, was his devotion to the blessed Virgin, to whom he was especially consecrated. Filled with love for, and confidence in, Mary, he addressed himself to her in all his wants, and felt quite assured of obtaining all he asked through her intercession."¹

If any doubt should still remain upon your mind upon this topic, surely it will be removed by the following unparalleled act of blasphemy. It is the production of one whom Popes delighted to honour. He was a Cardinal and a saint, and probably the latter from his intense devotion to the Holy Virgin. Amongst a variety of works in praise of Mary, St. Bonaventura published the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin. In this unique work his eminence takes the 150 Psalms, and so changes them that in every place where the writer uses the name of God, he places the name of the Virgin, thus demonstrating that in spite of your distinction of *dulia*, *hyperdulia*, and *latria*,² the attributes, the praise, the adoration, and

(1) Spirit of Liguori, p. 14.

(2) *Dulia* is the worship paid to saints,—*hyperdulia*, that to the Virgin,—and *latria*, that which is paid to God.

requests which the Psalmist everywhere teaches us to ascribe to God; the Cardinal teaches you to offer to a creature. There can be no mistake. If David and his brethren offered *latria* to God, the saint offers it to a creature. I care not how exalted. She may be Mother of God,—which by the way is an expression full of impiety,—or anything else you like; but the difference between her and the Eternal will always be infinite, and to attribute to any creature what the Spirit of inspiration has exclusively appropriated to the Divine Majesty, is to be guilty of the most fearful impiety. I repeat, if this be not idolatry, then it has no existence at present, and never did pollute the earth. Take as specimens the following. It opens in the preface with,—

“Come unto Mary, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and she will give you rest.”¹ “In thee, O Lady, have I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion; in thy grace uphold me.” “Unto thee have I cried, O Lady, when my heart was in heaviness, and thou hast heard me from the top of the everlasting hills.” “Into thy hands, O Lady, I commend my spirit, my whole life, and last day.” (Ps. xxx.) “O come let us sing unto our Lady; let us heartily rejoice in the Virgin that brings us salvation; let us come before her presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad with Psalms.” (Ps. xcv.) “Have mercy upon me, O Lady, who art called the Mother of mercy; and according to thy great compassion blot out all my iniquities.” (Ps. li.)

In this way the seraphic Doctor deals with all the Psalms, and ascribes to this poor mortal all the perfections of Deity. The *Te Deum* is thus rendered,—

“We praise thee, O Mary; we acknowledge thee to be the Virgin; all the earth doth worship thee, the spouse of the Eternal; to thee all angels cry aloud, Holy, holy, holy art thou, O Mary, Mother of God.”²

In the city of his Holiness you may see printed in large characters on the church near the Porta Angelica, the following example of unblushing impiety:—“*Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of Mary, that we may have mercy to pardon, and grace to help us in time of*

(1) Dr. Cumming, apud Anti-Maynooth Proceedings, p. 143.

(2) Anti-Maynooth Proceedings, p. 143. The reader may see ampler articles on this subject in Horne's Mariolatry, Elliot's Romanism, or King's Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Illustrated.

need.”¹ But this is Italy; take, then, a specimen for England. Look at it, and tell me if beyond your own community it is possible to find such a compound of ignorance and perversion of Scripture anywhere else:—

“ Mary is the tabernacle sanctified by God as his first habitation upon earth; she is the ark of the new covenant. How lovely is not this figure! What light does it not offer to us! It seems to me that the miraculous cloud which covered the ancient ark was a figure of the Holy Ghost enveloping with his Creator’s shadow the august Mother of God. Yet, under this mysterious shadow, it seems to me that I see Him forming in her chaste womb, and of her pure substance, a body for my divine Redeemer, which was to be one day immolated on Calvary. In the skins of various dye which covered the ark I see figured the humility of the august Virgin, who holds, veiled from human eye, the glory which she encloses in her womb. The candlestick with the seven branches, which stood in the sanctuary, reminds me of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, with which she was abundantly filled. The altar on which burned the perpetual fire, speaks to me of the ardent charity which night and day consumed her most holy heart. In the altar of holocausts I see that perpetual immolation which she made of herself at each instant to God. In the altar of perfumes I inhale the odour of her heroic virtues, which, ascending before the throne of God, induced him to descend on earth. The Ark of the Covenant, hidden in the Holy of holies, contains the tables of the law, and Mary conceals in her virginal womb the God who made the law. In this venerable Ark was also to be found *the manna* which fed the Israelites in the desert; and in Mary’s august womb lay hidden for nine months *‘the living bread which descended from heaven for the life of the world.’* Again, the Ark contained the rod, which, in testimony of his priesthood, blossomed in the hands of Aaron; and in the heart of Mary the lily of virginity bloomed in all its dazzling whiteness. What wonders are not there *hidden from the wise*, according to the word, and revealed to *little ones*, the children of faith.”²

St. Germain thus acknowledges her power:—

“ O my Sovereign! you are my guide in the pilgrimage of this world; the strength of my weakness, the riches of my misery, the balm of my wounds, the soother of my pains. . . . Be moved by

(1) Life of Mackintosh, by N. Macleod.

(2) The Month of the Nativity, pp. 16, 17. See also St. Liguori’s Religious Life, p. 127. Let me add one other precious specimen of the way in which these successors of the apostles deal with God’s word. (Numb. xvii. 18.) “ The rod signified the Blessed Virgin Mother, as the almonds, Christ; to wit: the utter pill his humanity, the shell his crosse, the kernel his divinity; who pacified by the blood of his crosse all things in earth and in heaven. This rod without root, neither itself planted, nor any live branch ingrafted therein, all day without joyce or moisture, bringing forth buds, flowers, and fruit, was a figure that our Blessed Lady should beare a sonne, and remain a virgin.”—Note in Douay Version. Capper’s Doctrines, p. 557.

my tears, O my Patroness; my refuge, my life, my hope, my salvation, my support."

Anselm of Canterbury says,—

"How is it that when, as we ask many things of God without obtaining them, we no sooner ask through Mary than they are granted us?" "One reason why our Lord left her behind when he ascended to heaven," he says, "was lest perhaps the court of heaven might have been doubtful which they should go out to meet, their Lord or their Lady." "The Blessed Virgin," he says, "has saved even the angels, many of whose seats would have been vacated, like Lucifer's, had it not been for her protection."¹

Is not this the equality of the creature with the Creator? Both are alike supplicated, but Mary is more benignant than "the God of all grace," who delighteth in mercy.

I select the following from "The Month of Mary," as it will show the kind of devotion you are constantly taught to pay to the Virgin:—

"For a rosary, a fast, she has sometimes conferred signal graces on the greatest sinners. Think, then, what she will do for you for a whole month dedicated to her service." (P. 11.) "That Mary obtains the salvation of her devout servants, is no great wonder; but that she should do so for one who never recollects her, this it is that shows the bowels of mercy of a mother's love."

Then follow examples.

"If you wish to escape sin, be especially devout to Mary," p. 25. "If God has delayed to punish you, ascribe it all to the intercession of Mary" (not to Christ!), p. 27. "If you wish for something extraordinary, whereby to be saved, you may always hope for it from the intercession of Mary," p. 41. "A little gift made to Mary has oftentimes gained Paradise, when forfeited, for sinners the most dissolute," p. 50. "He that loses devotion to Mary, loses the way to Paradise," p. 52. "Devotion to Mary is a most efficacious devotion, since she is the Mother of God; hence one has every reason to say, that she has all the treasures of the omnipotence, the grace, and the mercy, of her Son," p. 54.

From the Poor Man's Manual of Devotion I select the following:—

"O sweet and blessed Virgin Mary, daughter of God the Father, mother of Christ, the spouse of the Holy Ghost, gate of heaven, door of the firmament, hope of christians, fountain of piety, safeguard of peace, glory

(1) Popular Romanism Examined, pp. 190—1. Will the reader compare these extracts with Ps. xlv. 1; Ps. cxlii. 5, &c.? Taylor, p. 214. Usher's Reply to the Jesuits will supply the reader with other examples, p. 433.

of virgins, honoured above all angels, &c. O sweet Lady of Mercy, turn your merciful eye upon me, enlighten me with grace; O hear my prayer." Pp. 61—2.¹

Gross and revolting as such statements are, I am not much surprised. I have almost ceased to wonder at the wild vagaries and absurdities of human nature. Loosened from the influence of the truth as it is in Jesus, it will wander anywhere, and indulge in all sorts of monstrous errors. Nothing comes amiss to it. Still, I am free to confess, I can conceive of nothing in the shape of enthusiasm, superstition, and extravagance, which has not been perpetrated by illustrious saints of your communion. Your Church appears to me the conservatory of these, and the name of religion has been dishonoured by their saintly antics. What surprises me is, that any man should confound, or have the impudence to affirm that, this worship of the Virgin makes a part, or has anything to do with the religion of Christ. Marianism appears to me as distinct from Christianity as Judaism or Mahometanism. It has more of the gorgeousness of the former, or perhaps more properly of the Grecian mythology, than the simple, pure, and spiritual principles of the religion of Jesus. Certainly it makes no part of it, and is an excrescence on it, fearful and defiling; whilst I am equally certain that it is a mockery and a snare to its deluded votaries.

The silence of the New Testament upon the worship of the Virgin is deep and unbroken. Not the slightest allusion to it can be found, from Matthew to Revelation; and from no statement can any principle be inferred which would warrant or justify it. True it is, her name occurs in the evangelical history, but with no peculiar honour. The Saviour, as her son, in his intercourse, was always respectful and affectionate, but nothing more. Not an allusion to that sensual admiration of her beauty, &c., which in your writings proclaim more of the intoxication of love, than the influence of pure and spiritual feelings. The silence of the Divine Word is truly significant, and

(1) The little office in honour of the Immaculate Conception will supply the reader with other rich specimens of superstition.

mysterious too. We see nothing in such expressions as the following: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"¹ "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?"² "He said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!"³ &c., to warrant such high-sounding titles as "Queen of Heaven," "Spouse of the Holy Ghost," "Mother of God," "Mediatrice," "Daughter of the Eternal Father," &c. That she was a good woman, the Scripture renders more than probable; that she had the failings and imperfections of our common nature, I have no doubt. Like all others interested in the Saviour, she was simply a sinner saved by grace. She had no merit, no distinction, but what she derived from the Lord; and now in his heavenly kingdom she owes all to the same mercy and unmerited love.

The conduct of the apostles subsequently to the resurrection of their Master is equally void of evidence to justify such devotion. In their letters there is no allusion to our Lady. She is never invoked in their distress,—no sinner is directed in his agony to implore her succour,—no church to do her honour. Such prayers as the following never appear in the strains of their masculine and intelligent devotion: "Holy Mary, succour the unfortunate, aid the timid, counsel the unfortunate." "Mary, mother of grace, mother of pity, protect us against the enemy, and receive us at the hour of death." "Absolve the guilty, give light to the blind, dispel our evils, ask for that which is good for us."⁴ These great men were too much in love with the glories of their Master, the grandeur and moral dignity of his atonement so absorbed them, and their anxiety to bring all men under the authority of the Son of God was so intense, that they had no time to proclaim anything else than Christ and him crucified. Men that could pronounce the most fearful anathema upon those who preached another gospel, or taught men to place any dependence for grace and pardon upon anything short of the great truth, "That God was in Christ, reconciling the world

(1) John ii. 4.

(2) Matt. xii. 46—50.

(3) John xix. 26, 27.

(4) Bishop Luscombe's Church of Rome.

of the apostles, except one, visited the dying saint. Around her bed these devout sons gathered, waiting the final conflict. The Saviour himself, accompanied with nine orders of angels, united with them. For three days before her death, and three days after, they were employed singing the sweetest melody. She was buried at Gethsemane, after opposition from the Jews, and various miracles, especially one upon the high-priest, whose arms fell off when touching the bier; but upon his confessing Christ, they were immediately fastened on again.

“ They laid her in her humble tomb,
Far from the city’s busy ways,
Within the thicket’s rayless gloom,
Where few could thread its tangled maze;
So might no scoffer desecrate
That hidden grave, to all unknown,
Save those who, sad and desolate,
Kissed, morn and night, the sacred stone.
Hail, Mary! pray for us!”¹

Poor Thomas was, on some account, unfortunately absent. He came not till after the funeral. To gratify his desire to see the body, the sepulchre was opened, when, lo! a greater miracle still, no body could be found, but only the most delightful odour,² and they concluded that angels had carried it to heaven.³ The poet, as usual, embellishes a little.

“ They knelt around the hidden tomb,
The blessed Virgin’s earthly bed,
When, lo! amidst its shadowy gloom,
They found the glorious mother fled,

(1) Rosary of our Blessed Lady, p. 66. The license of the poet, we suppose, allows him to contradict the historian. Forgers generally expose each other’s deceit!

(2) Fragrance and peculiar odour in tombs is more or less regarded by Romanists as indicative of the remains of a martyr. But they forget to inform their readers of the more than probable cause of this. Tertullian tells us, Apol. c. 42, that the remains of the primitive christians were more or less always interred with many spices. “ We spiced linen cloths of spotless white,” says Prudentius, “ myrrh and frankincense embalm the body. . . . We will adorn the hidden tomb with violets and many a bough; and on the cold stone we will sprinkle liquid odour.”—Maitland’s Church of the Catacombs, pp. 45—6.

(3) I am indebted for these particulars to the Annotations on the Rhemish Test., Acts i. 14, Bp. Patrick, who quotes Pilberts, and Father Crosset, on the true devotion to Mary.

And where she lay, a wreath of flowers,
 Too bright, too fair for mortal eyes,
 For they were nursed in heavenly bowers,
 Fed with the dews of Paradise.

Hail, Mary! pray for us!"¹

Her exaltation was now complete, and she was crowned as the Queen of Heaven. "Our Heavenly Father gave the half of his kingdom to the Blessed Virgin, Queen of Heaven, which is signified in the case of Esther, to whom Ahasuerus promised the half of his kingdom. So that our Heavenly Father, who possessed justice and mercy, retained the former, and conceded to the Virgin Mother the exercise of the latter."²

The same teaching, more or less, pervades your Church. The Father and the Son are portrayed as stern and unbending; Mary, as ever tender and benignant. The former as frequently unwilling to save the guilty, or to help the oppressed, till literally compelled by the latter. This representation meets you everywhere in your devotional writings, and, to a mind conversant with the scriptural character of God, and the mediatorship of Christ, it is fearfully appalling. Take the following from many. To my mind the representation is awful. "Leo, an intimate friend of St. Francis, had a vision of the last judgment. Upon a great plain he saw two ladders descend from heaven, one of white colour, the other of red, upon the top of which Christ was supported, and then nearer to him the seraphic Father, who called his friars, who were standing on the plain with the rest; and he invited them to mount the ladder, animating them with sweet words. As they mounted by this ladder, one fell from the third, another from the fourth, another from the tenth round. Then Francis, looking sad, exhorted them to go to the other ladder, on which Mary was supported. They did so, and our Lady reached out her hand to them, and so they mounted easily to heaven." Poor

(1) Rosary, &c., p. 68.

(2) Biel on the Mass, apud Elliot, p. 754. "St. Mary Magdalen of Pozzi," says the same work, "saw the ever blessed Virgin going about distributing a sweet liquor, which was divine love; this gift is distributed only by Mary, therefore from Mary let us seek it." P. 13.

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creatures that we should be, if we had not this powerful mother, who helps in the most important matters him that is mounting to heaven only by the ladder of justice!¹

The first mention of anything like homage to the Virgin, with which I am acquainted, appears in connexion with the Colyridians, so called from certain cakes which they afford annually to the Queen of Heaven. They arose in Arabia,² and the practice seems only a relic of a more ancient custom, recorded by the prophet, of burning incense to the "Queen of Heaven, and pouring out drink-offerings to her."³ It would appear from Epiphanius, that they were chiefly women who addicted themselves to this practice. The saint thus indignantly speaks of them :—

"Let us put on the spirit of men, and beat down the madness of these women. For who of the prophets ever allowed that a man should be worshipped, much less a woman! Though the Virgin be a chosen vessel, she is yet but a woman. The old error shall not reign among us, to leave the living God, and to worship things that he has made; for he will not suffer the angels to be adored, how much less the daughter of Joachim and Ann, who was born as other mortals are born, of a father and mother."⁴

So far this sainted Father, who certainly was no Marian. But the tide of error still rolled onward, and the votaries of the Virgin Queen augmented. Titles of the most impious description were conferred upon her, and in spite of all opposition, she was ultimately enthroned, as the rival of the Saviour, for the homage of his professed church.

The growing importance of her Ladyship, and the wide circle she was called to fill in the religious sympathies of the christian world, rendered it imperative that certain questions connected with her should be speedily settled. It was an awkward thing to be found worshipping a sinner. Many felt this. The difficulty could only be removed by avowing her immaculate conception,—by

(1) The Month of Mary, p. 33. A work full of the most vital errors, as in the example above, where the teaching manifestly makes the truth of God a lie. See, for example, Acts iv. 12; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.

(2) Jortin's R. E. History, ii., p. 332.

(3) Jerem. xlv. 17.

(4) Preservative against Popery, p. 213.

stoutly maintaining that she was not born in sin.¹ It was the age of chivalry, and the indiscreet zeal of her votaries awakened the slumbering energy of the church. Ecclesiastics marshalled themselves for the conflict. The issues were immense. Universities sent their most erudite sons to the rescue. Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, and even Popes, mingled in the holy war.² St. Bernard, the last of the Fathers, headed the Dominicans in their opposition to this heresy;³ whilst the Franciscans, with equal fierceness, maintained the immaculate conception of the celestial Queen. Hot was the conflict, and rabid was the abuse these polemics poured upon each other. No term, in the very copious ecclesiastical vocabulary, was too bad for use, and it was long before their mighty fury exhausted itself. The Council of Basil, in 1439, affirmed the dogma as an article of faith, and Sixtus the Sixth established, in 1446, the feast of the immaculate conception; but it failed, and his Holiness, soon after, was forced to allow parties to form their own opinion upon the question.⁴ His infallibility was useless. Certainty upon this question, which shook the Church to its centre, cannot be obtained; and the Vicar of Christ, and even the Council, were forced to adopt the Protestant doctrine of allowing parties to form their own opinion; and to this day, the Franciscans maintain her sinless nature, and the Dominicans hold that the illustrious Lady was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity.⁵

Upon the identity of this worship, in principle, with that of the heathen, I shall not touch at present. An occasion, perhaps, more appropriate will present itself, in discussing the Saint-worship of your Church. And, in

(1) As early as the ninth century, this had been attributed to her by some, and the title, Mother of God, still earlier; but its use was marked by the most violent opposition. Amongst the rest, by Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople. See Socrates's E. History, lib. viii., p. 32. Neander gives an interesting sketch of this dispute, chiefly from Socrates, iv., p. 143. Also, Dean Milman's History of L. Christianity, vol. i., b. ii.

(2) Spanheim's Ann., p. 501.

(3) Neander's Life of Bernard, p. 6.

(4) Dupin, iii., pp. 343—4. Waddington, ii., p. 694.

(5) Mosheim, v., pp. 229—30.

the meantime, let me ask your attention to the varied aspects under which the "Queen of Heaven" has been represented. Beyond all doubt, she occupies, in your system, a position quite as prominent as that of Christ. Many examples given from your devotional works, show that she is more merciful, more solicitous, more ready, to help the guilty, than Christ himself; and that "if God has delayed to punish you, it is all to be ascribed to Mary's intercession." The same attributes, works, dispositions, adoration, dependence, praise, which inspired men teach us to ascribe to God and Christ, your writers instruct her devotees to ascribe to Mary. There is no difference. No man conversant with your manuals of devotion can doubt this. Read by the multitude, your fine distinctions cannot be understood: and the great mass of the Roman Catholic community, I have no doubt, fall into the most fearful idolatry.

No one familiar with the writings of the apostles can doubt the prominency they give to the mediatorial work and character of Christ. With them it is everything. Upon its perfection and constancy, they suspend everything which is dear to man here and in the future. Remove it, and there is universal darkness. Recognise it, and there is harmony, light, and consistency in their whole teaching. Without it, men have no hope. Interested in it, they have nothing to fear. From first to last, salvation is of grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus. But with you it is another gospel. The votaries of Mary have evidently dethroned him. She occupies his place. He cannot, for at times he is unwilling, to do his own work without her interposition.¹ True it is, the Scriptures say, "He ever lives to intercede for us;" but Mary is more ready to hear and answer our prayers. Look for a moment at the opinions of inspired men upon this subject in contrast with your own. Paul says there is "none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be

(1) Everywhere in Roman Catholic churches on the Continent, whether in paintings or sculptures, the Saviour is always represented as an infant in the arms of Mary.

saved.”¹ Yes, says St. Bonaventura, “*Whosoever thou wilt shall be saved.*” “*In thee have I placed all my hope.*” “*No one can be saved but through thee*” (Mary). Says another: “*No one can be freed from evil unless through thee.*” “*No one can obtain a gift unless through thee.*” John says, “My little children, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”² And Paul, “Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”³ Not so, you say; “*Mary is the advocate of all sinners who fly to her.*” “*The asylum of sinners.*” “*The blessed Virgin stands before the face of the Creator, always interposing her most powerful intercession for us.*” Paul, doubtless referring to God, says, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”⁴ “The throne of grace is neither God nor Christ,” says St. Antonines; “Mary is this throne of grace, from which God dispenses his blessings.” Paul tells us that, “It pleased the Father that in him (Christ) should all fulness dwell.”⁵ And John, “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”⁶ Not so, says St. Bonaventura; “Mary is the fountain in which all grace is collected.” “The great Queen of Heaven says, ‘With me are riches, that I may enrich them that love me’ (Prov. viii. 18—21). Let us, then, love Mary, if we wish to be rich in all grace.” “She is a treasury of grace.” “Another fountain of happiness for us is Mary, our Mother; so rich in goodness and in grace, that St. Barnard says, ‘There is no one in the world who does not participate in them.’”⁷

I might pursue this parallel to any extent, for the material is abundant; but I have said enough to illustrate the character and worship of this chief of your Church. The review is melancholy, and the feelings it

(1) Acts iv. 12.

(2) 1 John ii. 1.

(3) Heb. vii. 25—27.

(4) Heb. iv. 16.

(5) Col. i. 19.

(6) John i. 16.

(7) I am indebted for these to the “Visits to the most Holy Sacrament.” Many of the worst parts of this volume are from the Italian. It is sanctioned by his Eminence of Westminster.

excites depressing in the extreme. Scripture becomes more precious by this contrast, and the worship it enjoins more intelligent and lofty. Upon that we may repose with unfaltering confidence. Apostolic testimony is certain. Inspired teachers cannot lie. With them there was no motive to deceive. They demand our confidence: they are worthy of it. They exhibit Jesus, the alone, the all-sufficient Saviour. They did without Mary. They felt no need of her interposition. They utter no eulogium upon her merits: they are ignorant of her eminence and influence with the court of heaven. Not so, then, her boasted successors. They put forth other claims: they teach widely different doctrine. But which shall I believe, the mere official, or the true teacher? You admit the position I claim for Paul, for Peter, for Christ. Upon this point we are agreed, that Paul and his brethren could not be mistaken. But have you such claims, or, if you have presumption enough to put them forward, can they be sustained by the same infallible proofs? You cannot agree about the most important feature in your Goddess! The centre of unity has failed you! The chain of infallibility cannot decide! You do not know whether you worship a sinful creature or not! Upon this vital point darkness still surrounds you; and I fear it may be found at last, that you have loved the creature more than the Creator, who is over all, God, blessed for ever!

LETTER V.

SAINTS, IMAGES, AND RELICS.

Few persons will rise from the perusal of my last letter, I apprehend, without being struck with the contrast between pure Christianity and the system professed by your Church. The former is simple, intelligent, and clear; the latter gorgeous, mechanical, and mysterious. The one appeals to man's high and intelligent nature; the other to his senses and fears. Faith in the one is based upon evidence, and is always the result of conviction; with you enquiry is forbidden, doubt is dangerous, and the essence of true piety is implicit trust in some fallible guide. In the one case, mind is vital, free, and vigorous; whilst in the other its energies are shackled, and it is bound in fetters of iron.¹

Christianity exhibits one Redeemer. This is its true glory. It recognises Jesus of Nazareth alone. His atonement is man's hope, the source of life and purity to a ruined world. It meets all the wants of fallen humanity, and unites the conflicting interests of the Creator and the creatures. The faith which it recognises and inspires rests with unshaken confidence upon the Saviour, as "*able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" Christ fills the whole orbit of revealed truth, and sits enthroned in the high places of renovated hearts, conse-

(1) Now, such a guide ought always to be as an angel; that is, you are not to consider him as a mere man, nor to confide in him as such, nor in his human wisdom, but in God, who will favour you and speak to you by his ministry, putting into his heart and into his ministry whatever is requisite for your spiritual welfare; so that you ought to listen to him as to a blessed spirit, descended from heaven to conduct you up thither.—Devout Life, by St. Francis of Sales, p. 38. See also Instructions for Pious Souls, p. 9. The reader will consult Acts xvii. 2, for a different commendation.

crating all energies to his service, and subordinating all emotions and desires to his own glory.

In nothing does Marianism stand out in such dark and frowning relief as in this. It is imposing, sensuous, dramatic. To the one Mediator between God and man, it has added a multitude. Its agents are numberless. Its aids are inexhaustible. Ten thousand saints are daily helping the Redeemer in his intercession for the guilty. His interest in redeemed humanity is so feeble, his love for those for whom he shed his blood is so weak, that he needs the entreaties and perpetual admonitions of those whom he has raised to heaven, to induce him thus to succour and relieve them! All nature is invoked, enlisted, and laid under contribution. Nothing comes amiss to your system, as, by some means, a mysterious potency can be given to all things. The animate and the inanimate, the visible and invisible worlds, are all subordinate to your ministry. There is holy virtue in water and bread;¹ there is sanctifying power in cotton or wool;² and iron and wood are terrible in their spiritual influence, when properly approached, or even pontifically handled.³ Romanism stands alone. There is nothing like it. It has

(1) "Holy water is blessed by the prayer of the church, and by the sign of the cross. In reciting these prayers, Christ is asked to bless the water, and purify it, in such a manner that it may have virtue to drive away the devil, and whatever else may injure you. It is good to keep holy water in our houses, and to sprinkle ourselves with it when we rise in the morning, when we lie down at night, in times of danger and temptation."—Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, pp. 190—1. "What is blessed bread? Bread blessed by the prayers of the church, and by the sign of the cross. The custom of distributing blessed bread at mass, commenced when the faithful ceased to communicate every time they assisted thereat.—*Ibid.*, p. 191. Pope Adrian appears to have been the first who ordered holy water to be preserved in the church and in bed-rooms, to chase away the devil.—Extracts from the R. Breviary, by Anderson, p. 95.

(2) The scapula, which signifies a garment, is composed of two small pieces of woollen cloth, which are worn on the shoulder, as a mark of devotion to the Mother of God. In giving it to St. Simon, the founder of the order, she said, "Whoever shall die wearing this habit, shall not suffer eternal fire."—Our Lady of Mount Carmel, &c., pp. 13, 24.

(3) "Not to frustrate your pious design," said St. Gregory to the Empress Constantine, "I will send you some portions of the chain which St. Paul wore, and which work many miracles; if, however, I be able to file off any. These filings are often begged; and the bishop applies the file, and sometimes he immediately gets the filings, at other times he labours in vain."—Fleury apud Jortin., iii., 47. Examples of the power of the chains with which Peter was bound at Jerusalem and Rome, which marvellously united at Rome, and worked wondrous miracles, may be seen in the R. Breviary, pp. 121—2.

gathered from all sources, and condensed in itself the characteristics of all religions which have preceded it. Especially has it added to "the sure word of prophecy," many "cunningly devised fables." Nothing can exceed its vast appliances for supplementing the work of the adorable Redeemer. The more I investigate the system, and become familiar with the writings of your saints, the more my admiration is increased at the profound skill they all manifest in facilitating man's progress to heaven, and in relieving him of the necessity of vital godliness and a scriptural piety, as a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. My wonder is, that the devil has any chance at all, that purgatory has any inmates, or that a solitary soul, under the ghostly instructions of your priests, falls short of heaven. Upon some of the points indicated here, I propose to touch in this letter.

To attain to saintship in your communion is both difficult and rare.¹ I have no means of ascertaining the average number per annum, but they are not many. In apostolic times, all true christians were saints; but the Church of Rome, though boasting of this, manages to produce forty or fifty in a century. I found this, as an approximation to the truth, upon a statement of St. Liguori: "Out of the sixty who, during the last century (seventeenth), were enrolled in the catalogue of Saints, or honoured with the appellation of Blessed, all, with the exception of five or six, belonged to the religious orders."² Urban the Eighth forbade any scrutiny to be made till fifty years after death,—a most wise regulation this; and the cost of obtaining Saintship is now very great.³ Many who have attained to this distinction, have been celebrated only for the grossness of their superstitions, and the fierce-

(1) "At the canonization of a saint," says Lady Morgan, "the devil is always heard by his advocate against the motion."—Italy, i., p. 148.

(2) St. Liguori's Religious State, p. 123. The degrees of *Santo* and *Beato*, referred to above, must not be confounded. The former belongs to the highest degree of sanctity,—the latter may be conferred upon persons of a holy life, but without miraculous gifts. Roscoe's Leo the Tenth, Note, 262.

(3) In 1843, the beatification of St. Mary Frances, who died in 1814, cost only £11,000. Horne apud Elliot, p. 756. The first saint made in this new way, of which we have any account, was canonized about 993.

ness of their enthusiasm. Many of them stood in need of the quietude of an asylum, the soothing influence of a laundress, or the more vigorous efforts of a sanitary commissioner.¹ It would be a singular history to portray with truthfulness the vagaries of the Saints, and to exhibit the childishness of many of their pretended miracles, and especially the occasions on which they were performed. They degrade the majesty of God, and are unworthy of his interposition. Of St. John Climachus, who passed his life in a horrible cavern; or St. Simon, who diffused his odour of sanctity from the top of a pillar; or St. Catharine of Sienna, who lived several weeks upon nothing but the Eucharist, had her heart torn out by God, and replaced by his own most precious one; or St. Bonomeus, who lived upon bread and water, and was so exact, stiff, and austere, that after he was made Archbishop, he for twenty-four years only entered the house of his brother twice, and only the same time his own garden; or St. Hilary, who considered it an act of sensuality to change his hair shirt, and made his sanctity consist in the filth of the flesh.² Of St. Anthony, with his conflicts with devils, witnessing the ascent of the soul of his companion Paul to paradise; and of the kindness of two lions in coming out of the wood to dig the grave for him, to inter the dead body of his friend.³ Of another St. Anthony, him of Padua: the Spirit of God rested upon him when a suckling at the breast; he preached to the fish; mules, and other beasts, falling down in reverence before the Host.⁴ Of St. Vincent, who wrote to the Holy Trinity, and received back an answer, in order to convert an impenitent sinner; who also one day flew from

(1) Jerome says, "Dirty clothes bespeak a pure mind: a shabby cloak shows a contempt of the world." In a rhapsody, attributed to Athanasius, he tells us, "that Anthony never washed the dirt off his body, no, nor so much as his feet, unless they were wet by chance, when he waded through water on a journey."—*Life of St. Anthony*, pp. 53—4. London, 1696. Perhaps the reader will turn to a better book, and look at Matthew vi. 17.

(2) *Instructions for Pious Souls*, pp. 36, 67, 98, 101.

(3) *Athanasius's Life*. R. Breviary, pp. 49, 50.

(4) Being one day closely pressed by the devil, he indented the sign of the Cross in the hardest marble, as the only means of arresting his career. It is still seen in the Cathedral at Lisbon.—*Beckford's Italy*, ii., p. 202.

the pulpit round his church, and could work miracles at his pleasure.¹ Of St. Raymond, who sailed one hundred and sixty miles in six hours upon his cloak.² Of St. Eurygidius and St. Dionysius, who carried their heads under their arms some distance after they had been beheaded.³ Of a Mary Magdalene of Florence, who burnt with such fire of divine love, that, unable to bear it, she was obliged to cool her breast by pouring water upon it.⁴ Of Rosa, the first flower of sanctity of Lima, whose face, when an infant, was miraculously transformed into the appearance of a rose.⁵ One might fill page after page, without exhausting your Breviary. One or two from another work before me, I may be permitted to give. To St. Ursula the Saviour appeared, clothed in episcopal robes, and giving her his blessing; and, at another time, he entered by night into her chamber, whilst she was at her prayers. The blessed Margaret de Chateau was opened after she was dead, and in her heart they found three precious stones: on the one was engraved an image of our Blessed Lady; on the second lay little Jesus, surrounded by a flock of lambs; on the third stood St. Joseph, with a venerable countenance, a mantle of gold hanging upon his shoulder, a dove over his head, and a religious woman kneeling at his feet, like the deceased nun. I only add one or two more. One is a touching scene of the love of the Virgin. A monk of the name of Herman was so singularly devoted to the Virgin, that she took him for her spouse. An angel took him by the hand, and joining it to the hand of the sacred Virgin, who was there in great glory, said, "By the order of God, my Master, I give you the Virgin of virgins for your spouse; and, with the title of spouse, I give you the name of

(1) Dr. Achilli, p. 213—14, who gives his authorities.

(2) A common exploit this. St. Francis of Padua did the same. St. Hyacinth, a Pole, did the same.—Rom. Breviary, pp. 69, 82, 125.

(3) *Ibid*, pp. 86, 145.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 115.

(5) *Ibid*, p. 127. "St. Francis rolled upon a bed of nettles and thorns, to please God, till his body was a mass of wounds; but next morning they were found converted into a bed of roses, and now bloom in the garden of an Italian Convent."—Lady Morgan's Italy, ii., p. 307.

Joseph." She afterwards visited him frequently, sometimes in his cell, and sometimes placing the infant Jesus in his arms.¹ Clara of Montefalco, a saint who died at the beginning of the fourteenth century, had in a vision given her heart to Christ, that it might be crucified. After death, her heart, which had enlarged to the size of a child's head, was extracted, and preserved in a vessel near the altar. With trembling and with tears, her sisters of the cloister ventured to open it with a knife. On the right side they found, completely formed, a little figure of Christ upon the cross, about the size of a thumb. On the left, under what resembled the bloody cloth, lay the instruments of the passion, the crown of thorns, the nails, &c. So sharp was the miniature lance, that the Vicar General, Berengarius, commissioned to assist at the examination by the Bishop of Shpleto, pricked therewith his reverend finger!

This marvel was surpassed in the eighteenth century by a miracle more piquant still. Veronica Giuliani caused a drawing to be made of the many forms and letters which she declared had been supernaturally modelled in her heart. To the exultation of the faithful, and the everlasting confusion of all Jews, Protestants, and Turks, a *post mortem* examination disclosed the accuracy of her description, to the minutest point. There were the sacred initials in a large and distinct Roman character, the crown of thorns, two flames, seven swords, the spear, the reed, &c.,—all arranged just as in the diagram she had furnished.²

After these specimens, I may venture to affirm, without fear of contradiction, that from this class of the Romish communion may be selected men whose ignorance is shocking, whose conduct is a libel upon the religion of Christ, and who, instead of being held up to

(1) I am indebted for these to the *Glories of Joseph*, pp. 43, 53, 88. It is crowded with similar impiety.

(2) See *British Quarterly Review*, May, 1853, p. 330. Many other examples are given in the article. Equally striking is the following:—"When he, St. Ignatius, was dead, the name of Jesus was found written on his heart in letters of gold."—*Higham's Expo. of Mass*, p. 290.

men as the finest specimens of humanity, should be ranked with those whose example should be shunned by all who would promote the solid interests of virtue, and the happiness of man.¹ But this is not the place for such a task.

The Tridentine Fathers thus order all bishops and others who have the care of teaching,—

“That they labour with diligent assiduity to instruct the faithful concerning the invocation and intercession of the saints, the honour due to relics, and the lawful use of images; teaching them that the saints, who reign with Christ, offer their prayers to God for men,—that it is a good and useful thing suppliantly to invoke them, and to flee to their prayers, help, and assistance, because of the benefits bestowed by God, through his Son Christ our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour,—and that those are men of impious sentiments who deny that the saints, who enjoy eternal happiness in heaven, are to be invoked, or who affirm that they do not pray for men, or that to beseech them to pray for us is idolatry, or that it is contrary to the Word of God, and opposed to the honour of Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, or that it is foolish, to supplicate, verbally or mentally, those who reign in heaven.

“Let them teach, also, that the bodies of the holy martyrs and others living with Christ, whose bodies were living members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit, . . . are to be venerated by the faithful, since by them God bestows many benefits upon men; so that they are wholly to be condemned . . . who affirm that veneration and honour are not due to the relics of the saints, or that it is a useless thing that the faithful should honour these and others with sacred monuments, and that the memorials of the saints are in vain frequented to obtain their help and assistance.

“Moreover, let them teach that the images of Christ, of the Virgin, Mother of God, and of other saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and due honour and veneration rendered to them,” &c.

Subsequent writers are more explicit. From some cause or other, either from revelation of the Virgin or saints, their statements are more lucid. Mystery vanishes, and the reason of image-worship is clear. Difficulties retire, and they can either add to, or detract from, the Word of God as it suits them.

“The intentions and desires of the church are, that we should endeavour to seek Christ in and by his saints; for we are more likely

(1) “Men,” says Guisbert, “being condemned to the damnation of hell, would themselves, with that rich man, implore help of their votaries, if they were able, and it could avail them.”—Neander's *Life of Bernard*, p. 334, Note 7.

to find him in his saints, in the blessed Virgin, in St. Joseph,¹ St. John, St. Peter, &c., than when we seek him immediately and by ourselves. When, for instance, we wish to find our Lord in the blessed and glorious Virgin Mary, whom the church calls our advocate with Christ, we are assured by St. Bernard, that immediately she begins to pray for us to her Son, this divine Son remembers the power he has given to her over himself, in quality of mother, which he will never take away, because grace and glory have made her nature perfect, so that she can never lose her rights. The blessed Virgin soon, therefore, induces Christ to pray for us to his Father, and then she obtains what we are not sure of obtaining for ourselves; for we are utterly unworthy of approaching our Lord, and he has a right to reject us by his justice; since having entered, after his resurrection, into all the sentiments of his Father, he has the same disposition as his Father to reject all sinners; hence the difficulty is to induce him to change his character of Judge into that of Advocate; now this it is that all the saints effect, and especially the blessed Virgin."²

Paul says, that Antichrist shall be marked "*with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*" Will the reader now compare the appalling perversions of the Saviour's character in the closing sentence above, with the statement of Paul, "*He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us*"? The willingness of Christ to save the guilty must be annihilated, in order to form a basis upon which to rest the intercession of saints.

Romanism is not compatible with right conceptions of the Saviour's character. It must belie his perfect work, before it could introduce this monstrous doctrine. Nor is this all. The same writer gives us the following specimen of theological teaching. We could give richer examples upon other topics.

"Whatever Christ asks of his Father, all the saints also ask with him, as we are informed by these words of the Apocalypse: 'And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters; . . . and

(1) The worship of Joseph was established about 1370, and the following prayer is addressed to the saint:—"O most happy St. Joseph, you who had the grace of expiring in the arms of Jesus and Mary, obtain for me the grace to die the death of the just. Angels of heaven, and ye saints whom God has given me to protect me during my life, abandon me not at the hour of my death."—Way to Heaven, p. 414.

(2) Catechism of the Interior Life, pp. 86, 87.

the voice which I heard was the voice of harpers, harping on their harps.' You must know that in Scripture the word 'waters' signifies people; and that the saints, in their celestial harmonies, are compared to the sounds of the harp. Now, the saints and just souls are, as it were, the echoes whereby God hears the voice of Christ who fills them; so that whatever our Lord asks in prayer, all the church, in heaven and on earth, ask with him. Is not this consideration a great subject of confidence, and of the faith with which we ought to pray?"¹

Not satisfied with these additions to the Saviour's work,—with the potent aid of the Virgin, and her numberless subordinates,² you invoke the aid of the celestial hierarchy. All the orders of heaven are employed. As in Pagan Rome,³ so now, the interests of empires, of provinces, cities, families, nay, of individuals,⁴ are entrusted to their care. Before them you are taught to bow, whilst the divine majesty apparently retires to the solitude of his own immensity, or, like another Bramah, is wrapped up in the fulness of his own felicity, leaving the affairs of this inferior world as the great battle-field of conflicting principles. These doctrines occur again and again in your accredited writings. From a multitude, I must content myself with the following. It is from a work, sanctioned, in 1849, by four Vicars Apostolic.

"The church recommends us especially to honour the holy patrons whom we received in baptism,—the patrons of our parish, of our

(1) Catechism of the Interior Life, by M. Alier; translated by John Dalton, pp. 85, 86.

(2) "The church does render to the Blessed Virgin a worship superior to that of the other saints. Because the Blessed Virgin surpasses all other creatures in sanctity, and she possesses the inconceivable privilege of being the Mother of God."—Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, p. 291.

(3) That everything in public and in private life, domestic and rural economy, the months and seasons of the year, the days of the week, springs, groves, rivers, and mountains, were under the immediate tutelage of peculiar deities, was sedulously impressed upon the plebeian herd: there were town gods and country gods, household gods, gods for gardens, for boundaries, gods for every place and proceeding, even the most sordid, iniquitous, and absurd.—Rome under the Pagans, &c., i., p. 55. The production of a Romish, though nameless, author. Tertullian thus ridicules the Romans: "I will not stay to speak to you of all particularly; there is too great a number of them, new, old, Barbarians, Greeks, Romaos, strangers, captives, gods that are particularly adored in each province, those that are known in Greece and at Rome, males and females, gods of countries, and gods of cities, seafaring and warfaring gods," &c.—Apol. c. x. London, 1655.

(4) "The name of one or more saints is given to the persons baptized, in order to place him under their protection, and that he may imitate their example."—Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, p. 224. Poor things, there cannot be much rest for them. Only think of Paul or John looking after all named after them!

diocese, of our church, and of our country. The church gives to each of the faithful one or more patrons, in order that he may invoke them with special confidence, and imitate their holy example. Why does she give patrons to parishes, to dioceses, and kingdoms? She gives these in order to induce the faithful who reside in the parish, diocese, or kingdom, to invoke their holy patrons."¹

The following is a specimen of the prayers presented to these guardians, and it is to be frequently offered:—

"Oh, holy angel, who art appointed by the Divine goodness to be my guardian, to conduct my blindness, to teach my ignorance, to strengthen my weakness, and to excite my slothfulness, I heartily praise our common Lord for so singular a benefit, and thank thee for the many good offices which thou hast done unto me, defending me against so many dangers of body and soul. I humbly beseech thee to continue the same care in my behalf, until thou shalt have brought my soul into the happy port of everlasting salvation."²

But invocation is not enough: guilt is not only confessed, but even more, pardon is to be obtained through them. What your writers call "an act of confession," is made in the following terms. In it, every one will see that they are placed upon a level with God:—

"I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever a Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore, I beseech the blessed Mary, ever a Virgin, the blessed Michael the Archangel, the blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me."³

Inseparable from this is your worship of images. Mind has all but exhausted itself in the production of these things. Where your system prevails they meet you everywhere. They stand near your altars, adorn your temples, and receive with intense and profound adoration the homage of the ignorant multitude. I have gazed upon them with wonder, and seen the votive offerings hung around many, whilst to tales of their wondrous power I have listened again and again. I have ad-

(1) Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, p. 295.

(2) The Way to Heaven, by the very Rev. John Baptist Pagani, p. 107.

(3) The Way to Heaven, p. 114.

verted to some in these pages, and shall only notice a few. The fact is thus admitted and explained.

“Is it idolatry to honour the cross, the images of our blessed Lord, and of the Virgin, the images and relics of the Saints? No, it is not idolatry. 1st. Because to honour a thing is not to adore it: thus, we honour kings and great men, but we do not adore them. 2nd. The honour rendered to the cross, to images, and to relics, is referred to our Lord, represented by the cross, and to the saints, whose images and relics we venerate.”¹

Before we have done with this letter we shall see, if we mistake not, the want of truthfulness in this statement.

Of some of these images we have the most wonderful accounts. They are the products of unearthly hands, and, in many cases, have been sculptured in heaven. Perhaps the most celebrated in the Roman world is her Ladyship of Loretto. Like many of its class, this negro-looking figure is associated with the most marvellous legends. She sits enthroned in the identical house in which the Virgin was saluted by the angel, and in which the Saviour was brought up. To save this precious relic from the hands of the infidels, a band of angels was commissioned to remove it to Dalmatia. They executed their task in a blaze of light, and to the strains of the most enchanting melody. From some cause, the lordly proprietor of the domain failed in respect to the image of the illustrious lady, and the angel travellers resumed their journey; and after various trials to locate their burden, and as many failures, they finally deposited this most profitable gem at Loretto. The image is the production of St. Luke; but, from all accounts, reflects no credit upon his genius or the lady's beauty. Here it has received the homage of the Roman world, and probably for wealth, the fruit of the superstition of ages, has no equal in the world. The evidences of its wonder-working power are prodigious; and from the gifts of the humble peasants, to the gold and precious gems of the anointed but exhausted sensualists, the visitor beholds the extent of her influence and

(1) Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, p. 165.

control.¹ "The statue of Notre Dame de Tongre is made of wood, painted with superhuman skill. Antiquity regarded it as the *chef d'œuvre* of Paradise, and the handiwork of angels. It must have required a celestial artisan to have given the statue that air of simplicity it possesses."² Our Lady of Boulogne has something more romantic, and nearly rivals her of Loretto. In the year 633, a small vessel, without oars or pilot, conducted solely by the hand of God, or by the ministry of angels, was seen to enter the port of Boulogne. The people were at worship, but the blessed Virgin appeared to them in a visible shape, and told them of her exalted favour. They hastened to the port. A deep calm rested upon the water, and a halo of glory encircled the barque, which had just then floated ashore. Tradition attributed this image of wood to the hand of St. Luke. To the grief of many, after escaping various attempts to burn it, it fell by the ruthless hands of citizen Dumas.³

Of the wonders produced by some of these images, I have given specimens already. The following is equal to the winking Lady of Rimini:—

"In the church of St. Peter, Douay, there is an image of our Lady in the outer wall, before which some lads had set about playing rudely, at a time when certain persons, who were passing that way, had prostrated themselves to pray. The blessed Virgin wished to show how much she was displeased with the little respect they bore her; the statue moved, and lifted up its arm, as if about to strike the boys at play. Some of the lads saw it, and said, '*Don't you see that our Lady has lifted up her arm, and is going to strike us, because we are at play here before her?*' The alarmed boys soon proclaimed the miracle, and it required eight days visiting this figure by the people, with offerings and devotions, to wipe away the disgrace, when the image signified her reconciliation by performing many miracles."⁴

(1) Ency. Britan., where the reader may see a detailed account. Lady Morgan says, that for those who enter her house, the following prayer is presented: "Most Holy Virgin! beautiful Mother of God, and beautiful Mother of piety, my sweet hope! You who with a single one of your amorous glances," &c.—Italy, iii., p. 310. A notice of some of the rich gifts presented by the lovers of this amorous lady may be seen in this volume.

(2) Visits to the Shrines of Mary, p. 39.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 70—72. The reader will find more follies of this kind in this volume.

(4) Month of Mary, p. 73. Julian mentions, "that a pure vestal virgin drew onward by her girdle the ship laden with the statues of the great mother of the

From this specimen of savage and unbending obstinacy let us turn to brighter pictures, and more benignant influence. Rome and other favoured cities are rich in the remains of the first disciples and martyrs. The enthusiastic visitor is permitted to gaze with new rapture upon the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, encased in silver busts, set with jewels; a lock of the Virgin Mary's hair, a phial of her tears, and a piece of her green petticoat; a robe of Christ, sprinkled with his blood; some drops of his blood in a bottle; some of the water which flowed out of his side; some of the sponge; a large piece of the cross; all the nails used in the crucifixion; a piece of the stone of the sepulchre on which the angel sat; the identical porphyry pillar on which the cock perched when he crowed after Peter denied Christ; the rods of Moses and Aaron; and two pieces of the wood of the real ark of the covenant.¹ Nay, these are only a few. "There are fragments of the pillar of the temple that was rent in twain; of a portion of the table that was spread at the last supper; of the well at which the woman of Samaria gave water to our Saviour; of two columns from the house of Pilate; of the gridiron of St. Lawrence, and the stone below it, marked with the frying of his fat and blood."² Milan, in its splendid cathedral, has a fine show. "We saw," says Seymour, "several phials full of the teeth, bits of skin, scraps of hair, pieces of the nails, &c., of the twelve apostles; but they had not a single copy of the Scriptures."³ At Cologne repose the bodies

gods, which, till then, no physical force had been able to put in motion."—Ullmann, p. 101. On images opening their eyes, crying, &c., in Pagan Rome, see Dr. Philpot's Letter to C. Butler, p. 414. Tertullian admits the miracles attributed to the Roman gods; he does not deny the facts mentioned above by Julian, but he solves them upon a principle which we believe is as applicable to Romish miracles as to those of their predecessors.—Apol., p. 96, 97.

(1) Rome in the Nineteenth Century, pp. 234, 289.

(2) Dickens's Italy, p. 200. Townsend says, that he saw in a chapel a square marble slab under an iron grating, surrounded with money-boxes. "On this stone are the sculptured representations of two feet, of different sizes, as it seemed to me, which are said to be impressions of the glorified footsteps of our glorified Saviour."—Italy, p. 118.

(3) Pilgrimage to Rome, p. 79. There are no less than three coats of the Saviour, each pretending to be the one for which the soldiers cast lots.—Koch's Travels. Apud Athen., Oct. 1852.

of the three wise men, brought there in a most wonderful manner.¹ At Genoa, the bones of John the Baptist are kept, and when any uncommon tempest occurs at sea, they are brought out and shown to the raging weather, and then follows a great calm.²

No soil is so fruitful as Spain; and it is endowed with some of the choicest specimens of wonder-working bones and rags in the world. Few things are richer than the following, and the possession of one of these articles must be a mine of wealth. Mr. Ford is sustained by abundant evidence, when he says,—

“The country curates and quacks furnish charms and incantations; just as Ulysses stopped his bleeding by incantation. A medal of Santiago cures the ague; the handkerchief of the Virgin the opthalmia; a bone of San Margin answers all the purposes of mercury; a scrap of San Frutos, supplied at Sigoria, the loss of common sense. Every province, not to say parish, has its own titular saint and relic, which are much honoured and resorted to in their local jurisdiction, and very little thought of out of it. Zaragoza was admirably provided. A portion of the liver of St. Eugiaria was anciently resorted to in cases where blue pill would be beneficial; the oil of her lamps, which never smoked the ceilings, cured tumours in the neck; while that which burnt before the Virgin del Pilar, or the image of the Virgin which came down from heaven on a pillar, restores lost legs. Cardinal de Rita mentions, in his Memoirs, having seen a man whose wooden substitutes became needless when the originals were restored again on being rubbed with it; and this portrait was long celebrated by the Dean and Chapter with a special holiday.”³

Twiss is more explicit still, and will show the rage for these things in this devoted land.

“In Spain these treasures are very abundant. It has always been eminently distinguished by these precious gifts. In the church of the Escorial alone, there are not less than 11,000 priceless relics, all certified as the genuine remains of some illustrious saint or martyr. We mention a few. Of the Saviour, they have a sacred hair of his most holy head or beard, in a precious vase; several pieces of the holy cross, all garnished with gold and silver; thirteen thorns out of his crown; some pieces of the column to which he was bound, and of the manger in which he was born to die for us. Of the Virgin, there are three or four pieces of the habit which adorned that most pure and virginal body, in which was formed that of Christ our Lord; also a

(1) Beckford's *Italy*, i., pp. 42—3.

(2) Dickens's *Italy*, p. 42.

(3) Ford's *Gatherings in Spain*, pp. 237—8.

piece of the handkerchief with which she wiped her eyes at the foot of the cross. Besides these we possess a hair, which may be suspected to be that which, flowing down her neck, enamoured her spouse. We possess a thigh-bone of the glorious martyr, St. Lawrence; it is entire, but the hair is singed; the holes which were made in it by the prongs which turned him on the gridiron, are very visible. One of this saint's feet; the toes are entire, though contracted; between two of them is a small cinder, which, in the eyes of piety, shines like a carbuncle."¹

"The nails of the feet of Christ's image, at Calatiao, grew every week, and the clerk of the chapel keeps a box full of them, to give the parings to the people as a great relic, which they kiss and adore as if they were little gods."² Fragments of various parts of the Lord's body still exist: a tooth, the handkerchief with which he wiped his face when upon the cross, and upon which he left the most accurate likeness of himself, and some of his blood. The milk of the Virgin, some of her hair, and some oil from her breast, and her marriage-ring. Of her mother, we have various relics, and her wedding-ring. Mary Magdalene supplies us with several celebrated relics. Of prophets, we have the entire bodies of Samuel and Zachariah; whilst John the Baptist kindly furnishes us with ten heads; and of the whole apostles, scarcely one is wanting. Many of these have been discovered in the most wonderful manner, and in a way which far outstrips some Pagan tricks, of which they are, no doubt, clumsy imitations. I have often wondered that no vision led to the discovery of Adam's first coat, or his wife's distaff; or that the monks of Sinai had found no fragments of the broken tables of the law. Nothing has withstood the thirst for old bones and old clothes, and their accumulated masses now must be nearly inexhaustible. Upon Agnus Deis and crucifixes we must say but little. The former may be illustrated in a note,³ and the reader will learn

(1) Abridged from Twiss's *Travels in Spain*, &c., p. 105.

(2) Gavins's *Master Key*, p. 242. "In the Escorial is shown a feather from the wing of the archangel Gabriel, full three feet long, and of a blushing hue more soft and delicate than that of the loveliest rose."—Beckford's *Italy*, ii., p. 325.

(3) An Agnus Dei (so called from the image of the Lamb of God impressed on the face of it) is made of virgin wax, balsam, and chrism, blessed according to the form prescribed in the Roman ritual. The spiritual virtue or efficacy of it is

something of the latter from the following prayer, addressed to the crucifix. It is from the Roman Breviary, and is used on the exaltation of the cross, Sept. 14th.

“O cross, only hope, hail!
In this glory of thy triumph,
Give an increase of grace to the pious,
And blot out the crimes of the guilty.”

And also the following,—

“O cross, more splendid than the stars, illustrious to the world, much beloved by men, more holy than all things, who alone was worthy to bear the treasure of the world, sweet nails, bearing a sweet burden, save this present multitude assembled this day in thy praise.”¹
The following prayer is used at the consecration of a crucifix:—

“We beseech thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God, that thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless the wood of thy cross, that it may be a healthful remedy to mankind, a strengthener of faith, increase of good works, redemption of souls, a comfort, protection, and defence against the cruelty of our enemies.”²

We might fill volumes with specimens of prayers presented to saints and images; prayers, the extravagance and wickedness of which can only be equalled by those already given. Your popular devotional works are full of them, and to their use the greatest benefit is attributed. Let me select a specimen of some offered to Joseph. The writer, from whom I quote, confesses that the worship of this saint is somewhat modern; that from some cause or other his excellency has not been appreciated by the faithful till about the fourteenth century;

gathered from the prayer that the church makes use of in the blessing of it, which is to preserve him who carries an Agnus Dei, or any particle of it, about him, from any attempts of his spiritual or temporal enemies,—from the dangers of fire, of water, of storms and tempests, of thunder and lightning,—and from sudden and unprovided death. It puts the devils to flight, succours women in child-bed, takes away the stain of past sin, and furnishes us with new grace for the future, that we may be preserved from all adversities and troubles, both in life and death, through the cross and merits of the Lamb who redeemed and washed us in his blood.—See Cramp, p. 353.

(1) Bagot's Cat., Apend. ix., p. 53.

(2) *Ibid.*

“The venerable Brother Bernard, of Corlione, having asked our blessed Saviour if it were pleasing to him what he should have to read, the crucifix before which he was kneeling, answered, ‘To read, what? What book? I am thy book; this is all that is necessary for thee.’”—Spirit of St. Liguori, p. 80. Just such an answer as we may suppose a wooden head to give!

that Gregory XI. was the first Pontiff who appears to have dedicated a chapel to him, and Avignon the honoured place.¹ And yet, from his eulogist, the whole calendar, next to the Virgin, presents no one so deserving the adoration of the whole body of the faithful. Let the reader judge of his power from the following. His aid in perfecting the *interior or spiritual life* is marvellous. Under his influence all spiritual grace and virtues flow; temptations are detected and overcome; devils have been vanquished and ejected from the minds of his votaries. *Temporal maladies of all kinds* are subdued by his power. Weakness, fainting, loss of the use of the limbs, pleurisy, plague, and disease in every conceivable form or shape, can be removed by devotion to him. He aids in making converts, and in building convents. He favours marriages, assists chaste persons, befriends the pregnant, and helps those who are childless to become the joyful mothers of children. In a word, his power is limitless, and his influence never fails.² No one can wonder at such power who reflects for a moment upon the following:—

"O most venerable Society of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! I look on you and revere you as a most perfect image of the adorable Society of the three eternal persons of the Divinity, which you imitate, adore, and glorify most worthily."³ "O divine company of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, you are the source of all the graces and benedictions of earth, and of the glories and felicities of heaven! May heaven and earth bless and love you for ever!"⁴

From one of his Litanies I select a few expressions. The reader will recollect that every sentence is followed by the phrase, "Pray for us."

"St. Joseph, whom God loved from all eternity with special love.

"St. Joseph, whom the eternal Father made his vicar on earth.

"St. Joseph, whom the eternal Father constituted master of his household.

"St. Joseph, whom the eternal Father made prince of all his possessions.

(1) Glories of St. Joseph, &c., by the Rev. Paul Barrie, p. 30—1. Dublin, 1843. It is singular that though no saint exceeds Joseph, according to this French *Padre*, Dante never mentions him in his Poems. Moses, Peter, Francis, Benedict, are there, but no allusion to Joseph.

(2) *Ibid*, chap. xi., xii., xiii., pp. 106, 128.

(3) *Ibid*, p. 221.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 223.

" St. Joseph, whom the Holy Ghost sanctified in the womb of thy mother.

" St. Joseph, lily of charity, doctor of humility, splendour of modesty, example of all virtues, mirror of married persons, father of all the faithful, the helper of all who invoke thee.

" St. Joseph, who, as an angel, didst deliver divine oracles; who didst hold the mastery of the family of God the Father on earth; to whom the Almighty was subject, &c., pray for us."¹

I will only add a specimen of poetry from this work:—

" Sire, Jesus, Mary, Joseph live,
My soul in glory to revive.
To Joseph, Mary, and the Son,
Be glory given and praises sung.
Father, Son, Spirit, one in three,
To you I breathe eternally."²

" O nursing-father to Him who feeds all creatures ! O rich Joseph, to whom God himself becomes a beggar ! Thrice happy art thou, who hast him for thy debtor, who lends to every one whatsoever he possesses ; . . . but to oblige thee, God will become obliged to thee, and make himself thy debtor."³

Let me indulge you with a specimen from another work:—

" He is the only one to whom the Eternal Father has communicated the glory of his paternity, which is the richest gem in his crown, because in quality of Father, he is, according to theologians, the fountain, the principle, and source of Divinity."⁴ " To prove that to the flame of love, St. Joseph united the light of wisdom, it is sufficient to say that it was not the mystical body of the church which he governed, like St. Peter, but the Head; not the heaven, like the holy and wise angels, but the God of heaven and earth."⁵

I will only add another sentence:—

" But if we enquire who has saved the life of Jesus, you must be silent, patriarchs and prophets; you have not a word to say, apostles, martyrs, confessors: you must let St. Joseph speak; to him belongs this honour; he alone has been the saviour of his Saviour."⁶

I can only give now a specimen of the prayers addressed by you to saints.⁷ It is called "the Litany of St.

(1) Glories of St. Joseph, &c., by the Rev. Paul Barrie, pp. 156—158. Other Litanies will be found in this volume.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 227. (3) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

(4) Knowledge and Love of St. Joseph, p. 5.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 20. (6) *Ibid.*, pp. 24—6.

(7) The reader will find many in the "Key to Heaven," which want of space compels us to omit.

Aloysius." It opens with a few sentences common to all these forms, which we therefore omit, and only add, that at the end of every title the phrase, "Pray for us," occurs:—

"Holy Mary, Holy Virgin of Virgins, Holy Mother of God, pray for us. St. Aloysius, most beloved of Christ, the delight of the blessed Virgin, most chaste youth, angelical youth, most humble youth, pray for us. Model of young students, despiser of riches, enemy of vanities, scorner of honours, honour of princes, jewel of the nobility, pray for us. Flower of innocence, ornament of a religious state, mirror of mortification, mirror of perfect obedience, lover of perfect obedience, lover of evangelical purity, pray for us. Most affectionately devout, most zealous observer of the rules, most desirous of the salvation of souls, perpetual adorer of the eucharist, particular client of St. Ignatius, pray for us. . . . By the *merit* and intercession of St. Aloysius, deliver us, O Lord. By his angelical purity, deliver us, O Lord. By his sanctity and glory, deliver us, O Lord,"¹ &c.

To St. Agnes:—

"Agnes, the Lamb's wife, illumine us internally; eradicate the roots of sin. O Lady, singularly great, after the troubles of this life translate us to the assembly of the blest."²

No one can read these devotions without being struck with the fact, that you are taught more than the intercession of saints. Acceptance is urged on the ground of their merit. Through their merit and intercession, through their power "to preserve you from all sin," "to remove far from your heart all impure thoughts and affections, and, renewing in you the remembrance of eternity, and of Christ crucified, to imprint deeply in your soul the fear of God, and enkindle within you the fire of divine love,"³ the hopes of the future are based. One cannot contrast these with the simple and heart-cheering statements of an apostle, upon the sufficiency and the prevalent intercession of the Saviour, without recollecting those fearful words uttered by him: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

(1) The Title, Office, &c. of the Blessed Virgin Mary, pp. 67—9.

(2) Miss. Rom., Taylor, p. 194.

(3) *Ibid*, pp. 71—2.

In the first ages of the church, Pagans hurled the charge of atheism against Christians, because they had no altar, no sacrifice, no God, that is, doubtless, no images. The severe simplicity of their worship, and the spirituality of their religious dogmas, forbid this. It would be insanity to urge this against you. With a thousandfold more truthfulness might it be said, that you have long vacated the high vantage ground taken by your predecessors, and have stripped Pagan temples and altars of all their attributes, and have engrafted them upon the simple doctrine of the religion of Christ. Once Christianity was pure, perfect, potent, and by her unaided majesty, without an altar, a sacrifice, or a priest, trampled upon the magnificent rituals of Pagan worship; but now the glory of its character, as embodied in the Marian church, is its solemn pomp and sensual splendour, its "Lords many, and Gods many." Few men can gaze upon the full orb'd glory of your ritual, can look upon your numerous altars, can mark your various images and pictures of saints, can witness the votive offerings¹ which everywhere adorn the shrines, can see the rolling clouds as they ascend from the burning incense, can witness the fitful but dramatic movements of your priests, and their white robed attendants, without being struck, not only with the pomp, but with its similarity to the old Pagan superstition. England presents us with only a shadow of the magnificence of your service. On the Continent only, where Marianism is supreme, can it be seen in all its perfection. The satellites of a Nero or a Diocletian would find no ground now for their accusations. They would see no difference, only in name, between the forms of old and modern Rome. But this ground of change tells fearfully against you. Burning of incense before an image would be no trial of faith. The expedient of Julian, in sprinkling the various articles in the market with holy water, in order to starve or pollute the Christians, would now fail.² The change

(1) Polydore Virgil acknowledges that these are of heathen origin. See Middleton's Letter from Rome, pp. 25, 27. They are common to this day in the East.

(2) Middleton's Letter from Rome, p. 18.

is marvellous, the approximation to Paganism cannot be mistaken.¹ It is no longer matter of doubt, that many things in your ritual are borrowed directly from this source. Holy water, its composition, its use, &c.; your incense, your wax lights, your altars, your images, your surpliced attendants, your votive offerings, &c., can be distinctly traced to this origin.² The Vicar of Christ had no difficulty in appropriating to himself the highest priestly title in the Pagan world, and Pontifex Maximus was as gracefully worn by the one as the other.³ The Pantheon, the temple for the rabble deities of all nations, and which was consecrated by Agrippa to Jove and all the gods, under the magic influence of Boniface the Fourth, was rededicated to the Virgin and all the saints. Jove simply retired before Mary, and Venus, Apollo, and others gave place to all the saints. The appropriation involved no difficulty, the change was only in name, as the inscription on another testifies:—

“*Mars* hence expelled, *Martina*, martyred maid,
Claims now the worship which to him was paid.”

Or, as one of your poets has well sung:—

“As *Mars* our fathers once adored, so now
To thee, O *George*, we humbly prostrate bow.”

Upon the spot where the founders of Rome were supposed to have been suckled by the wolf, rose a beautiful temple consecrated to Romulus, and celebrated as singularly propitious to delicate children; it is appropriated to another demigod now, but it is still celebrated for the same wonderful power. Its name is changed, but not its superstition, as mothers now crowd its precincts imploring aid for their little ones. In the old system, deities presided everywhere, and over everything. Their powers were suited to the wants of humanity. Rivers and fields,

(1) “These are the idols of the infidels,” exclaimed an Arab, at the first sight of the Nimroud Sculptures. “I saw many such when I was in Italy with Reschid Pasha, the Ambassador Wallah; they have them in all the churches, and the Papas kneel and burn candles before them.”—Layard’s *Nineveh*, &c., i., p. 141.

(2) Middleton, pp. 15—17.

(3) Granville Sharpe’s *Remarks upon the Irish Catechism*, p. 73.

fruits and flowers, beasts and fowls, diseases and their remedies, had their separate gods. Over the destinies of a nation, the affairs of provinces, and the varied social wants of families, their influence was felt. In all matters concerning the individual or the commonwealth, their protection was invoked, and their guidance was sought. It is so still. We have seen before, that you have guardians of kingdoms, provinces, and individuals,¹ and equally so for all diseases and evils to which human nature can be exposed.

"Thus, for instance, St. Anthony, the abbot, secures his votaries from fire, and St. Anthony of Padua delivers them from water; St. Barbara is the refuge of the timid in time of thunder and war; St. Blass cures disorders of the throat; St. Lucia heals all diseases of the eyes; St. Nicholas is the patron of all young women who desire to be married; St. Ramon is their powerful protector during pregnancy; St. Lazaro assists them when in labour; St. Polonia preserves the teeth; St. Domingo cures the fever; and St. Roque is the saint invoked under apprehension of the plague. Thus in all diseases, under every pressure of affliction, some saint is accessible by prayer, whose peculiar province it is to relieve the object of distress."²

Few, moreover, who are conversant with the subject, can doubt the identity of your saint worship with the demonology of the Pagan world. Like you, the best of the heathens affirmed, that God could only be approached through the intervention of a demon. Plato taught in substance sound Romanist theology when he said, "Every demon is a middle being between God and mortal man." "God is not approached by man, but all the commerce and intercourse between God and men is by the mediation of demons. The demons are interpreters and conveyors from men to the gods, and from the gods to men, of the supplications and sacrifices on the one part, and of the commands and rewards of sacrifices on the other."³ A

(1) "We have each of us a good angel to protect us, that is to say, an angel guardian. Our guardian angel prays for us, he offers to God our good actions, he defends us against the devil, and he guards us in danger."—Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, pp. 65—6.

(2) The reader will find other examples in Townsend's *Travels in Italy*, p. 215. "The Madonna Incoronata of Foggia became wealthy by her paid protection of sheep, pigs, and turkeys, and was our Lady of the Larder."—Lady Morgan's *Italy*, iii., p. 7.

(3) See the authority in Bp. Newton's *Proph.*, ii., p. 437.

graphic description this of the intercession of saints; both clearly are of the same origin. Apuleius teaches the same doctrine when he says, "Demons are middle powers, by whom both our desires and duties pass unto the gods; they are carriers between men on earth and the gods in heaven; hence of prayers, thence of gifts; they convey to and fro; hence petitions, thence supplies; or they are interpreters on both sides, and bearers of salutations; for it would not be for the majesty of the celestial gods to care for these things."¹ Right sound Romanist theology this! I will only add here another specimen. Proclus, illustrating the office of these intermediate agents, says, "But demons are allotted a different prefecture over different herds of animals, so far as to the last partition, as Plato says; so that some of them preside over men, others over lions, and others over other animals, or have dominion over plants. And still more partially, some are the inspective guardians of the eyes, others of the liver, and others of the heart. But all things are full of gods, some providing for certain things immediately, but others, as we have said, for other things, through demons as media."² Like you, also, they taught that men had their attendant demons, who warned them of danger, and aided them in difficulties. The demon of Socrates is probably familiar to every reader; and Philostratus, in his life of Apollonius, records the same fact again and again of his hero.³ No one can mistake the identity. In all important points the agreement is very clear. So far have you carried this system of plunder, that you have stolen the very emblems of the Pagan deities and conferred them upon your saints. Jupiter had his eagle, so has John. Apollo his dragon, so has St. George. Ceres a torch, so has St. Genevieve. Prometheus a flame, so has St. Anthony. Vulcan a hammer, St. Eloi has the same.

(1) See the authority in Bp. Newton's *Proph.*, ii., p. 438.

(2) *Two Treatises*, &c., by T. Taylor, pp. 23—24.

(3) *Life*, &c., by Berwick. The reader will find a valuable and accurate illustration of the opinions of the Fathers on angels in Osborne's *Errors of the Fathers*, chap. v.

Mercury a wand, St. James is distinguished by the same.¹ It is an historic truth, that at a comparatively early period, many in the church paid undue honour to the illustrious dead. Erroneous as this was, distinct as it assuredly was from the worship of modern Romanists, yet there can be no question, that from this mistaken feeling has sprung up all the iniquity which at present distinguishes this corrupt community. Eusebius, Theodoret, and others, plead for it on Pagan principles. No scriptural authority, for none can be urged, was alleged in its defence. The former, after comparing the saints and martyrs with the demons of the Gentiles, and approving of the doctrines of Plato and others concerning them, says, "These things are befitting upon the decease of the favourites of God, whom you may properly call the champions of the true religion; whence it is our custom to assemble at their sepulchres, and to make our prayers at them, and to honour their blessed souls."² The latter, after referring to the same author, thus reasons, "The martyrs have blotted out of the minds of men the memory of those who were called gods. For our Lord hath brought his dead into the place of your gods, whom he hath utterly abolished, and hath given this honour to the martyrs; for, instead of the feasts of Jupiter and Bacchus, are now celebrated the festivals of Peter, and Paul, and Thomas, and the other martyrs,"³ &c. This is candid, and admits of no doubt. Later still, many of your own writers have been forced to admit these facts,⁴ and the whole policy of your Church has been to favour it. She has had but one object before her. To this she has conformed everything else. The principles which have influenced her operations, in seeking the so-called conversion of the heathen, have all tended in this direction. To wield a power over them, and not to enlighten them by the truth, has been her aim. Their superstitions have been left untouched, your missionaries

(1) Maurette's Farewell to Rome, p. 31.

(2) *Præp. Evang. Lib.*, p. 13. *Apud Newton's Proph.*, ii., p. 450.

(3) *Sermo De Marty.* *Ibid.*, p. 434.

(4) Middleton's Letter, p. 24.

have even encouraged them, and blended them with the purer elements of christian truth, and thus has gradually grown up the mongrel and revolting system which now prevails. This principle is manifest in the instructions of Gregory to Austin;¹ it is more fully developed in later times, when Rome was achieving its glories in the New World;² and in later days, it should have covered with infamy and disgrace the abominable proceedings of your Jesuit friends in India and China.³ The principle avowed by these spiritual dragons, solves the whole mystery of the idolatry of Rome. They have bowed to everything, assumed everything, and become literally all things to all men—a priest of Bramah or Confucius, the worshipper of Sheva or the friend of the Virgin—so that they might augment the power, and swell the influence of their mighty chief.⁴

I have already intimated that though at an early period extravagant honours were paid to martyrs, and subsequently religious services held in connexion with their tombs, and the anniversaries of their death, yet they had little in common with the subject of the present letter, and the superstition upon which we are now commenting was the growth of ages. Gregory, a saint and a Pontiff,

(1) Bede's E. Hist., book i., chap. 30.

(2) Acosta, though a Jesuit, says, "Many of them," the Indians, "were driven to baptism as beasts to the water." Orido says, "There was scarcely any one, or but extremely few, that willingly became christians." No, as another writer says in his work, most of your missionaries "have converted the sword of the mouth into the mouth of the church."—Notes on the Church, pp. 122, 123.

(3) Tennant's History of Christianity in Ceylon, &c. Quinet's Jesuits, sec. iv. Take the following as a modern illustration:—"In the church (Bebozi) I saw a few miserable priests, dressed up in all the horrors of red, yellow, and blue, miracles of saints and of the blessed Virgin, and a hideous infant in swaddling clothes, under which was written, 'I' Iddo bambino.' 'Can you understand these pictures?' I asked. 'No,' was the reply; 'we did not place them here; when our priest (a Nestorian) died a short time ago, Mutran Yusuf, the Catholic bishop, came to us. He put up these pictures, and told us we were to adore them. We pulled them down again; but for doing so, our Klayahs (heads of the village) were bastinadoed by Mahmoud Agha, the chief of Missouri, and we got our heads broken. We now, therefore, leave them where they are. And as the Kurds have been bribed not to allow a Nestorian priest to enter the village, we are compelled to hear the Catholic priest, whom Mutran Yusuf sends us.'"—Layard's Nineveh, i., pp. 154—5.

(4) The Abbe Dubois tells us that the Jesuits in India conducted the images of the Virgin and the Saviour in triumphal cars, imitated from the orgies of Juggernaut, and introduced the dancers of the Brahminical rites into the ceremonies of the Church of Rome.—Edinburgh Review, April, 1851, p. 415.

thus writes to a Bishop of Marseilles: "I have been informed that, seeing some persons worshipping the images in the church, you broke those images and cast them out. I commend your zeal in not suffering things made with hands to be adored; but I think you should not have broken the images. Images and pictures are put in churches, that they who are not able to read may see upon the walls what they cannot learn from books. You should, therefore, have preserved them, and have exhorted the people not to commit sin by worshipping them." Not satisfied with this letter, his Holiness again expostulated with the bishop. "Tell me, my brother, have you heard of any bishop who hath done what you did? This single consideration, should it not have checked you from endeavouring to appear the only wise and pious man of them all? I am informed that you have so scandalised your own flock, that most of them have separated themselves from your communion. Send for them, and show them from the Holy Scriptures that it is not lawful to adore things made by men; tell them that this abuse of images raised your indignation, and caused you to destroy them. Let them know that if they desire to have images in the churches for their edification, for which they were anciently designed, you willingly consent to it. Thus you will pacify them, and bring them back to your communion. If any one will make images, forbid him not; only suffer them not to be adored. The sight of historical pictures ought to excite in them religious compunction; but they must not bow down except to adore the Holy Trinity."¹ But the growth of this superstition was rapid. This original design of images and pictures was speedily forgotten, and the rabid zeal of the image worshippers soon involved the churches in one of those fearful commotions which departure from the simple truth of God is

(1) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., pp. 47—8. Epephanius writing to Chrysostom, tells him, that going into a church, in a village in Palestine, and seeing a curtain hanging over the door, on which was painted an image of Christ or some saint, in his zeal against such things he immediately rent it asunder.—See Cave's *P. Christianity*, i., p. 107. In the same volume will be found the opinion of the celebrated Augustine, p. 105, 106.

sooner or later sure to effect. For years the conflict raged. Council fulminated its anathemas against council.¹ Emperors were dethroned or wickedly removed. The Eastern church assumed an hostile attitude to the Western; but, partly by bribes, and partly by the cunning of an ambitious woman, the supremacy of the Virgin and her subordinates was restored, and they received again the homage of nearly the whole Church. Since then their worship has continued, augmented in power and fervency, and is now one of the prominent characteristics of the Romish Church.²

On the marked opposition of this practice to the New Testament I have already incidently remarked; and upon no other supposition can we account for the dealings of many of your writers with the moral law, in mangling the commandments of God, than the conviction that in their minds the impression was lodged, that it was inimical to these practices.³ No man can lay his finger upon any portion of the christian Scriptures which bears any analogy to these devotions. It may have other authority, but not this. Equally clear is it, that the early writers of the church knew nothing of this practice. We have already adduced opinions from some eminent men in a former letter, which are with equal force applicable to this. When they urge confession only to God, it is clear that they know nothing of the intercession of saints. No one can read, for example, the letters of Cyprian, addressed to men in every circumstance of trial, without being struck with the omission of all allusion to this. To God, to Christ, to the Holy Word, and the hopes and promises of the gospel, he can refer them as the only sources of consolation within their reach, and the only ones he knew. With Augustine he felt that, "The saints do not

(1) At one of these Councils (Nice) which sanctioned image worship, a Bishop of Cypress avowed, "For my part, I grant unto images that worship which is due to the Holy Trinity; and if there should be any one who should refuse to act in like manner, I hold him deserving of the fate of Marcion and Marces."—Maurette, p. 30. The Council of Elvira in Spain, A.D. 305, forbade the use of images and pictures in churches.—Du Pin's E. History, fourth century.

(2) See an interesting review of this controversy in Neander, vol. v.

(3) See G. Sharpe on the Irish Catechism.

ask any creature to assist them. Christ, therefore, whose help the saints do invoke, is the true God."¹ It is a notorious fact, moreover, that for centuries these things are not noticed in the records of the time. The Virgin is never referred to in the writings, the sculptures, or the pictures, of the early church. Celsus, Porphyry, and other antagonists, urge against the christians their want of images and temples. Could they do it now against modern Romanists?² True it is, you appeal to the ignorant upon the virtues of saints and images, and on the benefits derived from them you expatiate with wondrous power and fulness. The superstitious and the deluded may be captivated by them, but be assured that the intelligent and thoughtful will feel that in the sentiments of a writer of that period, uttered in opposition to the decision of a council, there is the greatest truth:—"Those who so express themselves, plainly declare that they were grossly blind; for they acknowledge that they had so bad a memory, that without the help of images they might easily be drawn from the service of God, and the love of the saints. They confessed that they were unable to raise the eyes of their understanding above the objects of sense, or to drink from the fountain of eternal light, without aid from that which is material and bodily. Since the spirit of man should exist in such close communion with Him according to whose image he was created, that he should be able to embrace, without the intervention of any creature, the image of truth itself, which is Christ; so it is madness to say, that this spirit needs some memorial to preserve it from forgetting the Redeemer. Such a notion bespeaks a shameful weakness, rather than that freedom which is the characteristic of the christian state. The faith of christians ought certainly not to depend upon outward things, but must be rooted in the heart." Again, "We christians, who contemplate with eyes unveiled the glory of God, and into whose image we are changed from glory to glory, must no longer

(1) Aug. Cont. Arian. Taylor, p. 187.

(2) See Maitland's Church of the Catacombs.

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(1) Neander, vol. v., pp. 305—6.

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(3) Usher gives a learned account of the opinion of the Fathers upon this subject, in his reply to the challenge of a Jesuit.

thus writes to a Bishop of Marseilles: "I have been informed that, seeing some persons worshipping the images in the church, you broke those images and cast them out. I commend your zeal in not suffering things made with hands to be adored; but I think you should not have broken the images. Images and pictures are put in churches, that they who are not able to read may see upon the walls what they cannot learn from books. You should, therefore, have preserved them, and have exhorted the people not to commit sin by worshipping them." Not satisfied with this letter, his Holiness again expostulated with the bishop. "Tell me, my brother, have you heard of any bishop who hath done what you did? This single consideration, should it not have checked you from endeavouring to appear the only wise and pious man of them all? I am informed that you have so scandalised your own flock, that most of them have separated themselves from your communion. Send for them, and show them from the Holy Scriptures that it is not lawful to adore things made by men; tell them that this abuse of images raised your indignation, and caused you to destroy them. Let them know that if they desire to have images in the churches for their edification, for which they were anciently designed, you willingly consent to it. Thus you will pacify them, and bring them back to your communion. If any one will make images, forbid him not; only suffer them not to be adored. The sight of historical pictures ought to excite in them religious compunction; but they must not bow down except to adore the Holy Trinity."¹ But the growth of this superstition was rapid. This original design of images and pictures was speedily forgotten, and the rabid zeal of the image worshippers soon involved the churches in one of those fearful commotions which departure from the simple truth of God is

(1) Fleury apud Jortin, iii., pp. 47—8. Epephanius writing to Chrysostom, tells him, that going into a church, in a village in Palestine, and seeing a curtain hanging over the door, on which was painted an image of Christ or some saint, in his zeal against such things he immediately rent it asunder.—See Cave's *P. Christianity*, i., p. 107. In the same volume will be found the opinion of the celebrated Augustine, pp. 105, 106.

sooner or later sure to effect. For years the conflict raged. Council fulminated its anathemas against council.¹ Emperors were dethroned or wickedly removed. The Eastern church assumed an hostile attitude to the Western; but, partly by bribes, and partly by the cunning of an ambitious woman, the supremacy of the Virgin and her subordinates was restored, and they received again the homage of nearly the whole Church. Since then their worship has continued, augmented in power and fervency, and is now one of the prominent characteristics of the Romish Church.²

On the marked opposition of this practice to the New Testament I have already incidently remarked; and upon no other supposition can we account for the dealings of many of your writers with the moral law, in mangling the commandments of God, than the conviction that in their minds the impression was lodged, that it was inimical to these practices.³ No man can lay his finger upon any portion of the christian Scriptures which bears any analogy to these devotions. It may have other authority, but not this. Equally clear is it, that the early writers of the church knew nothing of this practice. We have already adduced opinions from some eminent men in a former letter, which are with equal force applicable to this. When they urge confession only to God, it is clear that they know nothing of the intercession of saints. No one can read, for example, the letters of Cyprian, addressed to men in every circumstance of trial, without being struck with the omission of all allusion to this. To God, to Christ, to the Holy Word, and the hopes and promises of the gospel, he can refer them as the only sources of consolation within their reach, and the only ones he knew. With Augustine he felt that, "The saints do not

(1) At one of these Councils (Nice) which sanctioned image worship, a Bishop of Cypress avowed, "For my part, I grant unto images that worship which is due to the Holy Trinity; and if there should be any one who should refuse to act in like manner, I hold him deserving of the fate of Marcion and Marces."—Maurette, p. 30. The Council of Elvira in Spain, A.D. 305, forbade the use of images and pictures in churches.—Du Pin's E. History, fourth century.

(2) See an interesting review of this controversy in Neander, vol. v.

(3) See G. Sharpe on the Irish Catechism.

ask any creature to assist them. Christ, therefore, whose help the saints do invoke, is the true God.”¹ It is a notorious fact, moreover, that for centuries these things are not noticed in the records of the time. The Virgin is never referred to in the writings, the sculptures, or the pictures, of the early church. Celsus, Porphyry, and other antagonists, urge against the christians their want of images and temples. Could they do it now against modern Romanists?² True it is, you appeal to the ignorant upon the virtues of saints and images, and on the benefits derived from them you expatiate with wondrous power and fulness. The superstitious and the deluded may be captivated by them, but be assured that the intelligent and thoughtful will feel that in the sentiments of a writer of that period, uttered in opposition to the decision of a council, there is the greatest truth:—“Those who so express themselves, plainly declare that they were grossly blind; for they acknowledge that they had so bad a memory, that without the help of images they might easily be drawn from the service of God, and the love of the saints. They confessed that they were unable to raise the eyes of their understanding above the objects of sense, or to drink from the fountain of eternal light, without aid from that which is material and bodily. Since the spirit of man should exist in such close communion with Him according to whose image he was created, that he should be able to embrace, without the intervention of any creature, the image of truth itself, which is Christ; so it is madness to say, that this spirit needs some memorial to preserve it from forgetting the Redeemer. Such a notion bespeaks a shameful weakness, rather than that freedom which is the characteristic of the christian state. The faith of christians ought certainly not to depend upon outward things, but must be rooted in the heart.” Again, “We christians, who contemplate with eyes unveiled the glory of God, and into whose image we are changed from glory to glory, must no longer

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LETTER VI.

THE DOCTRINES OF PURGATORY, AND PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

Error never stands alone. It is always fruitful. Departure from the truth is always followed, more or less, by many wanderings. The Church of Rome is a living proof of the accuracy of this. She has committed the capital blunder of discarding from her creed, and putting from her ministry, the Scripture doctrine of salvation by grace. She has rejected the all-sufficiency of the Redeemer's merits, and, as a consequence, the great truth, that we are justified by faith alone. From this gross error have sprung all her efforts to supplement the work of Redemption. Not one could exist without it. Every one must trace to this fruitful source her doctrines of indulgence, penance, the intercession of saints, pilgrimages, the merit of good works, and especially the dogma upon which I propose to touch in this letter. Its claims are broad, and must be investigated. It is one of those questions which no thoughtful person can approach without interest. A thousand thoughts float in rapid succession across the mind as it stands before one. The assumptions of priestly power it unfolds are so bold, the sources of worldly influence and wealth it opens to the Church are so large, the callous indifference it manifests to human misery are so appalling, the immoral and materialising influence it everywhere exerts, and the bold anti-scriptural character of the whole, render it matter of surprise that men should tolerate it now. Only one fact stares one in the face, and that solves all the mystery. It is a profitable dogma to the Church of

Rome, and no experience, no evidence, no reasoning, no facts, can induce her to relinquish error, however absurd, however unchristian. It would be her ruin. Her *prestige* would be broken, and then her power would vanish, like the mist of the morning, before the advancing and increasing splendour of the light of day. The venerable Fathers of Trent, guided as they say by the Holy Spirit, thus infallibly proclaim the doctrine:—

“Since the Catholic church, instructed by the Holy Spirit, through the sacred writings and the ancient traditions of the Fathers, hath taught in holy councils, and lastly in this œcumenical council, that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls detained there are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful, but especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the mass; this holy council commands all bishops diligently to endeavour that the wholesome doctrine of Purgatory, delivered to us by venerable Fathers and holy councils, be believed and held by Christ’s faithful, and everywhere taught and preached.”

After avowing the existence of Purgatory, the Fathers say,—

“Let the bishops take care that the suffrages of the living faithful, viz., masses, prayers, alms, and other works of piety, which the faithful have been accustomed to perform for departed believers, be piously and religiously rendered, according to the institutes of the church,”¹ &c.

Upon this dogma, as on most others, these infallible guides manifest the soundest discretion. Little more than the bare fact is announced, and we are forced to wade through the volumes of the expounders of these dogmas to satisfy ourselves upon many points. Upon the precise locality of Purgatory we have a variety of opinions. Fancy is really wild, and one’s gravity can scarcely be maintained whilst reflecting upon some of them. “What place,” says Dr. Milner, “must that be which our Saviour calls Abraham’s bosom, when the soul of Lazarus reposed among the other just souls, till he by his sacred passion paid their ransom? Not heaven, otherwise Dives would have addressed himself to God instead of Abraham, but evidently a middle state.”² There is reasoning for you!

(1) “I constantly hold that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.”—Pius the Fourth.

(2) End of R. Contr., Letter iv.

Can you match it from any source? Bellarmine tells us "that it is adjacent to the place in which the damned are punished," and holds that "purgatory, hell, and the abodes of fathers and of children, are subterraneous places."¹ A third, more enlightened than the Cardinal, assures us that "it is under the earth, and near the centre, on the brink of hell!" Whilst a fourth, with equal confidence, assures us "that it is the common place of the damned." Bede has presented another, revealed in vision to a celebrated monk, more minute and graphic in its details. This great spiritual purifier appeared as,—

"A vale of great breadth and depth, but of infinite length; on the left it appeared full of dreadful flames,—the other side was no less horrid, for violent hail and cold snow flying in all directions; both places were full of men's souls, which seemed by turns to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the cutting cold, and finding no rest there, they leaped back again into the middle of the unquenchable flames."²

Differing widely from this, Gavin tells us, are the opinions of the Spanish infallible teachers. Their views are more gorgeous and aristocratic. Regularity, order, and distinction, mark their conceptions. Purgatory is divided by them into eight compartments, and each occupied by a different class. The first is allotted to kings as the greatest criminals, and the last to the poor. The degree of torment corresponds with this graduated scale in rank and worldly dignity, and greater efforts, and consequently more pay, are required to liberate the monarch from his gloomy prison-house, than the poor.³ What tact this discovers! How telling upon the interests of the priests! Perfectly just, too, for the greater villains should pay

(1) "It is probable that it is not far from hell, and that the just souls are purged with the same fire as that with which the damned in hell are tortured."—Purgatory Opened, p. 9. From the Italian.

(2) Ec. Hist., Lib. v., c. 12.

(3) Master Key, p. 166. Erasmus's Praise of Folly, p. 109. There is a small folio engraving, containing a semi-section of hell, which is a globe divided into four parts. The first presents the devil sitting on the body of Judas in the centre, surrounded by fire containing the lost. The second is Purgatory with its inhabitants. The third is the place of infants, whose heat is less fierce. And the fourth is the Limbo of the Fathers, to which Christ has penetrated from his grave, &c.—Hone's Religious Mysteries, p. 121.

more for their release, than the souls of those whom they had oppressed during their life of tyranny and crime!¹

Of the nature and degree of the punishment inflicted in this dolorous region we gather some information from various authors. For example, we are told, and one cannot help admiring the positiveness with which these statements are made, that—

“*They are in a real though miraculous manner tormented by fire, which is of the same kind, (says Bellarmine,) as our element of fire.*”² Of the extent of this we gather from another source. “*The Angelical St. Thomas teaches that the sufferings of our blessed Lord, in his passion, are surpassed by those inflicted in this prison of woe.*”³

“*If all the pains that have ever been undergone by men, were suffered by one person alone, it would be light and supportable in comparison of the torment of Purgatory.* St. Mary Magdalene di Pazzi says, that they exceed those of our Lord during his passion.”⁴

St. Thomas says, “that the flames of Purgatory are of the same nature as those of hell; and hence they act not by a natural virtue, but as instruments of Divine justice, which is, as it were, the fire of those fires, and which endows them with a force which they intrinsically do not possess.”⁵

With the fact, then, so clear before us, that Purgatory is some place, somewhere, but where no one knows, partaking of the nature of heaven and hell,⁶ we may advance a step further. It exists for some purpose, and is occupied by a class of intelligences, uniting the excellences of the one, and the defects of the other. The merits of Christ have elevated the inhabitants of the former to the state of bliss and perfection in which they dwell; but they

(1) Dante probably has embodied in his “Vision” the common notions on this subject. The place of infants, the Limbo of some of the Fathers, he thus describes:—

“There is a place
There underneath, not made by torments sad,
But by dim shades alone; where mourning’s voice
Sounds not of anguish sharp, but breathes in sighs.
There I with little innocents abide
Who by death’s fangs were bitten, are exempt
From human taint.”—Dante’s Purgatory, Canto vii.

(2) Purgatory Opened, p. 10.

(3) Devotion for the Souls in Purgatory, by the Ven. H. M. Bouden, Archd. of Evraux, p. 10.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 48.

(5) *Ibid*, p. 12.

(6) United with the severest torments, souls in Purgatory enjoy incredible consolation, on account of their certain hope of salvation.—Cardinal Bellarmine.

have failed, assuredly failed, in securing the perfection and freedom of these unhappy creatures. Your Church teaches this. Everywhere it meets us. Upon this doctrine Purgatory stands. The atonement of Christ, the merit and intercession of saints, penances, and indulgences, having failed to emancipate the soul from some of the consequences of sin, these poor creatures are destined to pass through a purifying process, by which all the dross will be removed, in longer or shorter periods, according to the benevolence of friends, and *the intention of the priest*. I am not, you know, overstating this monstrous and *pagan* doctrine. Let us see. In one of your catechetical works you are thus taught:—

“What sort of christians go to Purgatory? *First, Such as die guilty of lesser sins, which we call venial, as many christians do who, either by sudden death or otherwise, are taken out of this life before they have repented for these ordinary failings. Secondly, Such as having been formerly guilty of greater sins, have not made full satisfaction for them to Divine justice.*¹ Why do you say that those who die guilty of lesser sins go to Purgatory? *Because such as depart this life before they have repented of these venial frailties and imperfections, cannot be supposed to be condemned to the eternal torments of hell, since the sins of which they are guilty are but small, which God’s best servants are liable to. Nor can they go to heaven in this state, because the Scriptures assure us (Rev. xxi. 17) there shall in nowise enter therein anything that defileth. Now every sin, however small, defileth the soul. Hence our Saviour assures us that we are to give account for every idle word.*”² (Matt. xii. 36.)

Much in the same strain write the authors of the Douay catechism. The annotator of the Douay bible tells us:—

“For when any die penitent, and yet hath not made full satisfaction, they must suffer for what remaineth after death, and be purged, before they can enter into rest. Which remnant of debt our blessed Saviour calleth the last farthing, and saith it must be paid.”

“What goes on in Purgatory? Men are burnt in a great fire kindled by Divine justice. They love God, yet are punished by God. They desire to see him, but cannot. . . They suffer torments much greater than all the torments of the world, but by force, without merit, and without recompense.”³

(1) “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from *all* sin.”

(2) Grounds of Catholic Doctrine, &c.

(3) Month of Mary, p. 74.

"Purgatory is a place of purification for those souls who have not entirely expiated their sins."

"Can we shorten or mitigate the sufferings of the souls in Purgatory by our prayers and good works?" "Yes, we can do so, since there is between those souls and ourselves a community of prayer and good works, which we call the Communion of Saints."¹

Again and again we are told that this place is for the souls of the pious, for those who have had the eternal punishment of their sins remitted, but who have not fully satisfied for the temporal punishment due to their mortal sins, which are forgiven them, and who therefore go to Purgatory till they have made full satisfaction for them.² I was curious to know what those venial sins are for which Bellarmine informs us "the Fathers constantly teach that the punishments are most excruciating, and that no pains of this life are to be compared with them."³ Many of your writers are so fond of the obscure,—they are cloudy when one wants clearness, dark when one needs light, aye, and contradictory when one imperatively needs certainty,—that upon this point they seldom touch. The following delighted me. I felt at rest. It is worth embalming, and I give it therefore a place here:—

"For what reasons are souls sent to Purgatory? *A nun went there for something said in a whisper in a choir; a religious man for not bowing his head at the Gloria Patri at the end of the Psalm; a holy virgin for washing with too much nicety on a Friday; St. Peregrinus and St. Paschasius for the very smallest faults; St. Valarius, Bishop of Augusta, for a little too much affection for his nephew; a holy preacher for excessive attachment to his own writings [poor man, perhaps no one else cared for them]; and so many others.*"⁴

Another informs us,

"That for the least and lightest offences, as idle talk, immoderate laughter, household care, which is scarce occupied without offence, you will suffer."⁵

(1) Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, p. 136.

(2) Abridgment of Christian Doctrine, p. 100.

(3) The Cardinal must have been napping when he penned this sentence, or something worse, for singular as some of these old gentlemen were, many of them absolutely condemned it, and taught a perfectly opposite doctrine.—See Bishop Luscombe's Church of Rome and the Bible, and Usher's Answer to the Challenge of a Jesuit, pp. 173, 194.

(4) The Month of Mary, p. 75.

(5) Fulke's Note on Matt. xii. 32.

Such is your teaching upon this theme. It would call forth a variety of questions, could we stop to put them; and in every intelligent and scripturally regulated mind would a variety of emotions, better understood than expressed, arise. It certainly uplifts the veil of the future, and reveals the secrets of your gloomy prison-house in a striking way. We stop not to enquire the medium through which all this intelligence has been obtained, because with the "more sure word of prophecy," which has been given to us, visions and dreams are of no use.

But appalling as this prospect is, for there is but little hope of escape for any of you, still you are not left in despair. You teach that the merits of Christ were more than were necessary for the dead; that many saints and martyrs have acquired more merit than was necessary for their own use, and to this is added the superabundant goodness of the Virgin. These constitute an inexhaustible fund of excellency and moral worth, entirely under the care of his Holiness. From this unappropriated wealth, the wants of the indigent, for certain gifts, can be abundantly supplied. All deficiencies can be made up, all defects more than removed, from the Church's storehouse. Individual piety is unnecessary, because you can be supplied by proxy, and that without difficulty, too, if you happen to be rich. Only pay, and the Church can supply any demand you make upon her holiness or good works. That incarnation of worldly pomp, Leo the Tenth, thus infallibly teaches:—

"The Roman Pontiff may, for reasonable causes, by his apostolic authority, grant indulgences, out of the superabundant merits of Christ and the saints, to the faithful who are united to Christ by charity, as well for the living as for the dead; and in thus dispensing the treasure of the merits of Jesus Christ and the saints, he either confers the indulgence by the method of absolution, or transfers it by the method of suffrage. Wherefore all persons, whether living or dead, who really obtain any indulgences of this kind, are delivered from so much temporal punishment, due according to Divine justice for their actual sins, as is equivalent to the value of the indulgence bestowed and received."¹

(1) Cramp, p. 328.

The same dogma is proclaimed by the venerable Fathers at Trent:—

“Since the power of granting indulgences has been bestowed by Christ upon his church, and this power, divinely given, has been used from the earliest antiquity, the Holy Council teaches and enjoins that the use of indulgences, so salutary to christian people, and approved by the authority of venerable Councils, shall be retained by the church.”¹

More explicit still is Father Gandolphy. He explains the process by which these singular riches are acquired. His statements are worthy our marked attention. Rome should be proud of such illustrious exhibitions of the profound and mysterious.

“Good works have a double claim on the bounty of God, one in quality of merit, the other in quality of satisfaction; and as the satisfaction arising out of the good works of the saints far exceeds their temporal debt to the justice of God, it becomes a balance in favour of the church, which, through the infinite mercy of God, she is authorised to apply to the exigences of her other children,—which treasure, derived from the virtues of the saints, through the superabundant merits of Christ, form an inexhaustible stock of satisfaction, which the church and chief pastor are empowered to apply to the general advantage of the faithful.”

“It would be easy to show, that the satisfactory merits of the Mother of God, St. John the Baptist, the apostles, prophets, as well as other saints, have far out-balanced their common debt of satisfaction.”

“I inform you, that as we may ransom our own debt by prayer, by the sacraments, and the several works of penance; so, by directing our intention, we may likewise discharge the debt of others through the same means. We may, in short, effect for each of the faithful what we may effect for ourselves, and transfer to another member that aid which he so essentially needs.”²

Nor is this all. Relief may be obtained from the merits of saints here. The worth and sufferings of saints here may be appropriated before death.

“The wonderful virgin, Christina, who, for the good of the dead, really put into practice that which the apostle said, ‘I desire to be

(1) Pius the Fourth says, “I also affirm that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to christian people.” His Holiness, by mistake, says people instead of priests!

(2) Richardson’s Reply, &c. Cardinal Guster maintained, on the authority of the Church, “that one drop of the blood of Christ being sufficient to redeem the whole human race, the remaining part that was shed in the garden, and upon the cross, was left as a legacy to the Church, and might be distributed by indulgence from the Roman Pontiffs.”—Roscoe’s *Leo the Tenth*, vol. ii., p. 442, note 48.

separated from Christ for my brethren's sake,' one day being lifted in spirit, and conducted by God to see the things which the souls in purgatory suffered in that furnace of fire, was so moved with compassion at seeing them thus sorely tormented and agonized, that when left by her God at liberty to choose one of the two lots—either to pass at once into the glory of Paradise, or to remain in life in order to give suffrages to these blessed souls, without a moment's hesitation she clung to the latter."¹

"Whether, however, the souls in purgatory have their punishment mitigated by virtue of the suffrages, is a doubt which St. Thomas seems to solve, when, speaking of the mass, he asserts, that this sacrifice lightens the pains of the souls in purgatory. The great St. Jerome, too, does not hesitate to affirm, that the souls which are tortured in purgatory, for which the priest is wont to pray in the mass while the sacrifice is celebrated, feel no torture. And St. Gregory the Great, speaking of those who devoutly hear the holy mass for the souls in purgatory, asserts, that they alleviate the punishment of the souls of the dead."²

Nay, more than this. These souls have not only the sympathy of holy mortals, but of higher spirits. We are told, referring to the ingratitude of some who will not *pay* for the relief of these poor souls,—

*"It is not in this manner the holy angels treat those poor souls; they visit and console them, particularly such as have honoured them on earth. It is by means of these blessed spirits that they know what passes on earth, and who they are that most assist them: thus they have an opportunity of showing their gratitude by a reciprocal return, which opportunity is not neglected by them."*³

It is difficult to tell the duration of these sufferings. They vary according to circumstances.

"Now it has been revealed to holy persons, that some souls have been condemned to the flames of purgatory for one hundred years, others for five hundred years, and many more until the day of judgment. St. Lewis Bertrand assures us, that the soul of his father was confined there for eight years, though he was a very holy man, and favoured with extraordinary graces; and that he himself neglected no means of relieving him, reciting for him prayers, practising rigorous austerities, and offering for his benefit a number of masses."⁴

With these resources of spiritual wealth, you have also the most ample instruction for its appropriation.

(1) *Purgatory Opened*, pp. 27, 28.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 15.

(3) *Devotions for Souls in Purgatory*, pp. 24, 25.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 18.

Every device is employed, with special tenderness to the manifest disinclination of the living, and the purgatorial victims, to secure a large share of it for these sufferers. Indulgences are very potent. The relief they give is extraordinary and mysterious. They have a charm, which money can give to nothing else; they exert an influence in a way which no one can describe. This may be inferred from the following statements:—

“How long are souls in Purgatory? How long will you give to them? Let us give to each venial sin one day only in Purgatory, and suppose that each day you commit thirty faults; therefore to any day of your life, thirty days of Purgatory will answer; to any year, thirty years; to fifty, fifteen hundred years; to sixty, eighteen hundred years. Immortal God! what an astonishing payment! Add to the venial sins some mortal sins, absolved indeed, as far as the guilt goes, but not paid for entirely as far as the punishment goes. How many other centuries of years in Purgatory? In the mean time you may wipe off the whole account with small mortification in this life.”¹

Exquisite pathos! Have you seen anything like it? “Immortal God! what an astonishing payment!” contrasts so charmingly with, “You may wipe off the whole account with small mortification in this life!” Take the following as specimens of the ease by which this enormous debt can be reduced:—

“Indulgences are mitigations granted by the Church of the rigour of temporal punishment due to sin. The Church mitigates the rigour of these punishments by applying to our souls, exclusive of the sacrament of penance, the superabundant satisfaction of Christ, of the blessed Virgin, and of all the saints.”²

“A plenary indulgence, duly gained, is a full and entire remission of all the temporal punishment due to sin; a partial indulgence, such as of ten years, or one hundred days, &c., dispenses from as much temporal punishment due to sin, as would be remitted by ten years or one hundred days of the canonical penances which were in primitive times imposed on sinners.”³

“Many of the *Novenas* in the authorised collection of indulgence prayers have an indulgence applicable to the dead attached to them, which indulgence may be offered for the dead at the same time that we offer the prayer for any other object. A great deal may be done by taking care never to stint *Novenas*, by which we cannot EARN such indulgences.”⁴

(1) Month of Mary, p. 75.

(2) Cat. of the Dio. of Paris, p. 261.

(3) Penitent's Manual, p. 11.

(4) Purgatory Opened, &c., p. 7.

Pius the Sixth, for repeating a prayer I have not room to quote,—

“Has granted one hundred days’ indulgences, once a day, to all who devoutly say this prayer; and, moreover, an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines, applicable to the souls in Purgatory, to all who, with due dispositions, visit the image or picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in any church or oratory, or on any altar where it is placed for public veneration, and pray, during some space of time, according to the intentions of his Holiness.”¹

The same Pontiff, for the following so-called “*pious offering to the sacred heart of Jesus*,” shows at how trifling a cost immense relief may be secured. Truly does the enlightened author of the “Month of Mary” say, “that we may wipe off the whole account with small mortification in this life.” Read the task, and then mark the reward:—

“I, N. N., that I may be grateful to Thee, and may repair my past sins and infidelities, give Thee my heart, my beloved Jesus; and with thy help I resolve to sin no more.”

Pope Pius the Seventh has granted one hundred days’ indulgence, once in the day, to whomsoever shall repeat the above with a contrite heart! Also a plenary indulgence once a month, to all who, having confessed their sins and received the holy communion, shall repeat the above offering before a picture of the “Divine Heart of Jesus,” praying according to the instructions of his Holiness!²

If possible the following is more liberal still, and if Romanists have the common spirit of humanity, if they have any faith in these dogmas, then Purgatory must often be desolate, and its fires burn without a victim:—

“Praised and blessed in every moment be the most Holy and most Divine Sacrament.”

Pope Pius the Sixth granted an indulgence of one hundred days, once in the day, to all who with contrite hearts should say this ejaculation. During the Octave of Corpus Christi, and on all Thursdays of the year, three hundred days’ indulgence to all who say it three

(1) Visits to the Most Holy Sacraments, p. 286.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 286.

times. Also to all who have said it daily for a month, a plenary indulgence once a month on the day when, having confessed their sins and received the holy communion, they shall pay for the necessities of the Holy Church, according to the intentions of his Holiness. Pius the Seventh added an indulgence of one hundred days, applicable to the poor souls in Purgatory, to all who hearing mass shall, at the elevation of each of the sacred species, repeat the above ejaculation.¹

John the Twenty-Second, who assumed the tiara in 1316, issued a prayer, "*by repeating which devoutly, looking meanwhile upon the face of Christ, an indulgence of ten thousand days may be obtained.*" This was the face of Christ, supposed by Mabillon to have been impressed upon a handkerchief during his agony, by Du Cange, whilst on his way to Calvary, and by Baronius supposed to have been left upon the head-dress in the sepulchre. Afterwards it became a woman, and was known as St. Varonica.² Better still, Dickens tells us, that an altar in Rome has this inscription, "*Every mass performed at this altar frees a soul from Purgatory.*"³ Nay more, "*When a rose, blessed by the Pope, had been presented to a church in Aix, Innocent IV. granted indulgences to all persons who confessed there. Urban IV. granted the same to all who should listen to the same sermon with the King of France.*"⁴

It has been calculated by a laborious German, that an active man, by spending three shillings in coach hire, might obtain in an hour, by visiting different privileged altars during the Holy Week in Rome, twenty-nine thousand six hundred and thirty-nine years, nine months, thirteen days, three minutes and a half, diminution of purgatorial punishment. This merciful reprieve was offered by Spanish priests in South America, on a grander style, one commensurate with that colossal con-

(1) Visits to the Most Holy Sacraments, p. 287.

(2) Maitland's Ch. in the Cata., pp. 134—5.

(3) Italy, p. 195.

(4) Gieseler, iii., pp. 370—1.

tinent : for a single mass at San Francisco in Mexico, the Pope and prelates granted thirty-two thousand three hundred and ten years, ten days, and six hours' indulgence.¹

To the power of indulgence, we must add the efficacy of the mass. This is strongly recommended as one of the most sovereign remedies which mercy has provided for the relief of the distressed. We are told by men of the highest standing in the Church, that

"The souls departed are assisted by our prayers, especially by the holy sacrifice of mass. Because by it the merits of Christ, the victim offered up for all men, are applied to the souls in Purgatory. The Church prays for all who have departed this life in her communion."²

There is a mystic process carried on, we are assured, by which certain results are secured to the souls of the dead, —a sort of transference of the Saviour to the individual communicant, so that his personality and volition become absorbed in the celebrator, and he can use the Redeemer according to his own will. In this way the mass becomes a mighty means of benefit to the suffering in Purgatory. If the following be true, you must see that Romanists are either fools or something worse, if a single soul is left in Purgatory after the offering of any mass for the dead:—

"When a soul receives the body and blood of Christ, from that moment she enters into all the designs and intentions of our Lord, making use of our blessed Saviour as she would of something belonging to herself; hence when she communicates, with the intention of relieving a soul in Purgatory, or with the desire of drawing down the benediction of heaven on the whole Church, she has a right, in virtue of this holy union, to employ all the powers of Christ, and his zeal, and his fervour, his merits and sufferings, for the accomplishment of her desires. She has the right and power to direct the prayer of our Lord to whatever side she pleases, and to ask from him all that she may desire for the good of the Church; so that what she would be

(1) Gatherings from Spain, pp. 251—2.

"To redeem a soul out of purgatory, the market price varies as does the Bank Stock, higher or lower, in several countries, and in several seasons, as best pleases priestcraft, those spiritual stock jobbers. "When I was in Spain and Portugal [1667], I could have had a friend's soul fetched out of purgatory for £25, namely, one thousand masses at 6d. each."—Hickeringill's Priestcraft, &c., p. 7.

(2) Cat. of the Dio. of Paris, p. 297.

ashamed to ask *for herself* (not being worthy to obtain the least thing), when she demands it in and by Christ, she sees that it is too insignificant not to be granted.”¹

“Blessed John of Alvernia used to celebrate on this day (2nd Nov.) the holy mass for the souls of the faithful departed with so much fervour, that it seemed as if he wished to melt his whole self into tears. On one occasion, while elevating the most holy body of the Lord, he offered it to the Eternal Father, praying him, with the utmost fervour, that he would deign, for the merits of his only begotten Son, to set the souls in Purgatory free from such great pain, and admit them to his glory, and he saw a great multitude mount to Paradise, in the form of a great number of sparks coming out of a furnace.”²

“A certain author relates that a widow, having provided the person who killed her son with a horse and money to evade the officers of justice who were in pursuit of him, was rewarded for her charity by an assurance that her son was released from Purgatory that same night, in consideration of her heroic act.”³

Upon this aspect of the doctrine I will only add two other extracts at present.

“*The most Serene Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, who to avoid the chastisement which she had reason to expect from Divine justice if she had not fulfilled her duties on behalf of her departed husband, Archduke Albert, gave proof of a most singular piety in behalf of the same. It is enough for us to know, that she got forty thousand masses celebrated as a suffrage for him, and had public and private prayers made for him for thirty successive days, assisting herself at ten masses every day.*”⁴

The next is still more touching, from the consolatory influence it must exert upon your mind, from the glorious uncertainty about the issue, after all your money paid for masses. It is worthy your attention.

“Before his death, a parent besought his son to remember to give suffrages to his soul after death. The son executed his father’s commands, and applied many suffrages to relieve him. After thirty-two years, the poor father appeared to him, all surrounded with horrible flames, and explaining to him the dreadful pains which he endured, he complained bitterly of him, because during so many years he had not given him a single suffrage. ‘How?’ answered the son, ‘not given you any suffrage, when I have made so many alms, so many fasts, so many prayers, and continue every hour to pray for you?’ ‘Know, O my son,’ said the father, ‘that all the good you have done, and are doing,

(1) Catechism of an Interior Life, p. 95.

(2) Purgatory Opened, p. 31.

(3) Devotion to the Souls in Purgatory, p. 36.

(4) Purgatory Opened, pp. 95, 96.

as it has profited you nothing, so also it has profited me nothing, because you have done it in mortal sin. Your confessions always were useless, because they were devoid of the necessary grief. God, by reason of his mercy, has ordained that I should make you aware of this, for my advantage and your improvement.”¹

From a great variety of prayers occurring in your Manuals of Devotion, I select the following, as one of the best illustrations of the kind of devotion which is breathed in the masses for the dead :—

“ Most clement Lady, most worthy Mother of Christ our Redeemer, most holy Mary, through whom our wretched human nature has been replenished with the fulness of grace and benediction, offer, I pray thee, to the eternal Father, the most holy sacrifice of the real body and blood of thy Son, together with all he said, did, and suffered for our redemption, in suffering for the souls in Purgatory, especially those to whom we are most obliged, and those for whom we afford our instructions in the mass. Vouchsafe, O Mother of Mercy, fountain of all consolation, to make them sensible of the efficacy of this most holy sacrifice. Cause them to be conducted by their guardian Angel to enjoy with them the blessed contemplation of the most holy Trinity, to whom be all honour and glory for all ages for ever, Amen.”²

Marvellous as these things are, your storehouse of relief is by no means exhausted, for there are greater things than these. Indulgences are only trifles, the solemn mass for the dead is only a relief. Mary carries away the palm, by conferring upon her votaries the most speedy and complete deliverance. Small must be the mortification necessary in this life to save us from Purgatory, when the use of a bit of rag, worn in her honour, will effect this. I refer to the holy Scapular. Before me is a copy of Devotions, to our Lady of Mount Carmel; and from this singular production I shall make an extract or

(1) Purgatory Opened, pp. 33, 34. The fearful extent to which the trade in indulgences was carried up to the Reformation, may be seen in D'Aubigné's Hist., vol. i. The population of Naples is immense, and there is scarcely a family the members of which have not for a long course of years bequeathed sums of money to ensure the repose of their souls. In process of time the number of Masses to be said in one year has accumulated to such an amount that now ten thousand priests could not say them. With respect to the Masses for the dead, said and unsaid, a tabular statement is submitted to the Pope each year; and he, taking into consideration all the circumstances, pronounces his decision, that the Masses remaining unsaid *should be considered as said*; and so they are accordingly.”—Whiteside's Italy, iii., p. 104—6.

(2) Way to Heaven, p. 190—1. The *Garden of the Soul*, the *Key of Heaven*, and works of this class, will supply the reader with examples of masses for the dead suited to an English audience.

two.¹ The Virgin Mother, on presenting the Scapular to St. Simon, said,—

“My beloved son, receive this Scapular as the livery of my confraternity. It is a privilege granted to you and to all the Carmelites; it shall be a mark of predestination, a safeguard in danger, a pledge of peace and of eternal alliance. Whoever shall be so happy as to die wearing this garment, shall not suffer the flames of hell.”²

Greater still were her promises to his Holiness John XXII., “when the Queen of Heaven appeared to him, surrounded with supernatural light, and wearing the habit of a Carmelite,” and said,—

“If among the religious or brethren of the confraternity, who depart out of this life, there shall be any who for their sins shall be cast into Purgatory, I, their glorious Mother, will descend in the midst of them into Purgatory, on the Saturday after their death; I will deliver those whom I shall find there, and take them up into the holy mountain, in the happy regions of eternal life.”³

Besides a variety of plenary indulgences, there is a special promise of what is called the Sabbatine privilege, and which has been confirmed by various Pontiffs. This is, that our Lady of Mount Carmel “will release from Purgatory those who die wearing her livery, on the first Saturday after their death.” To secure this invaluable deliverance, you have only, “First, to observe chastity, according to one’s state of life. Secondly, for those who can read, to recite every day the little office of the blessed Virgin, as it is found in the Roman Breviary. For those who do not know how to read, to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays, unless when Christmas falls on either of those days.”⁴ To silence all doubt upon this subject, you are told she is not only Queen of Heaven, but that “the blessed Virgin has full power in the regions

(1) This fanatical devotion to the Scapular was instituted towards the middle of the thirteenth century, by St. Simon Stock, who made the hollow of an old tree serve him for an oratory, a bed, and a cell.—Scapular of our Lady of Mount Carmel, p. 14.

Early in the same century (fifteenth), an opinion was propagated, “that those who die in the habit of St. Francis, and making profession of the third order, remain only one year in Purgatory; because the saint descends there once a year, and takes away all those of his order to heaven with him.”—Waddington’s C. Hist., ii., p. 694.

(2) Scapular, p. 16.

(3) *Ibid*, p. 18.

(4) *Ibid*, pp. 34—39.

of Purgatory; and there are no other bounds to the power of Mary than the Almighty himself."

Such is the teaching of your Church on this subject. I have made no allusion to those in relation to the Crusaders,¹ &c. I have not touched upon the multiplied cheats to which this dogma has given rise; or upon the clubs or associations formed by the priests in Ireland² for the payment of masses for the relief of the souls in Purgatory. An ample theme would open here, but I must not look at it. Upon the whole, two facts are clear: the priesthood has the power of mitigating the sufferings endured. With his Holiness it is unlimited. If he decrees that "*the performance of a single mass, before a certain altar, shall deliver a soul from Purgatory,*" one is at a loss to know why it required forty thousand, besides many other prayers, to save the poor Archduke! Why is it? Is not money the main cause? Does not this exert the chief influence? Only have sufficient of this, and all is right. I confess that I am at a loss to reconcile the humanity of the priesthood with this course; I say nothing of the Christianity of those persons which will keep men in torment, "*more severe than that endured by our Lord,*" for generation after generation, unless they are paid for the exercise of their benevolence.³ All thinking men will agree with the celebrated Abelard, when condemning these superstitious practices in his time:—

"Why then, since heaven is in their power, are they so cruel as not to remit all penance, if they remit it simply out of love? Is it not monstrous that they should allow any member of their congregation to be damned, when they have full power to absolve them?"⁴

(1) The reader may see these in Hallam's *Middle Ages*, or in Sismondi.

(2) Ample details on these may be seen in Elliot's *Romanism*, the *Protestant*, and other works.

(3) Every reader who has visited Roman Catholic Countries must have been struck with the revolting purgatorial exhibitions which frequently are seen. Dickens refers to one, and says, "Still further to stimulate the charitable, there is a monstrous painting on the plaster, on either side of the grated door, representing a select party of souls frying," &c.—Italy, 61. No one who has visited the Cathedral at Antwerp will ever forget the scene exhibited there. It is not a painting, but a carved representation. The naked bodies of the sufferers are surrounded with flames, while with imploring look and outstretched hand they solicit the aid of the spectator, and below are boxes to receive the gift. I never gazed upon a stronger proof of the inhumanity of the priesthood.

(4) Neander's *Bernard*, p. 197.

That this doctrine should be held by the Church of Rome excites no surprise; but I am astonished, I confess, at the grounds upon which she maintains it. Upon its conformity to very early dogmas, I mean anterior to Christianity, sustained by the most vigorous intellect and subtle thought, she might have rested. To Zoroaster, Plato, and their disciples, she might have appealed with confidence;¹ they would have supported her plea, and supplied her with reasons. In the paganism which Christianity found overshadowing the Roman empire, she might have fixed upon something corresponding with it. Virgil, beyond all doubt, embodied the prevailing notions of his countrymen, when he said,—

“For this are various penances enjoined;
And some are hung to bleach upon the wind,
Some plunged in water, others purged in fires,
Till all the dregs are drained, and all the rust expires.
All have their manes, and those manes bare;
The few, so cleansed, to these abodes repair,
And breathe, in ample fields, the soft Elysian air.”

I repeat, that to these sources the doctrine might have been traced with confidence; but to refer us to the Holy Oracles, for such practices as we have detailed in these pages, is such a demand upon our credulity as almost overwhelms us with surprise. Still such is the fact. Without a blush, the Fathers at Trent base it upon this authority. They gravely say, “Since the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Spirit, through the sacred writings, and the ancient traditions of the Fathers,”² &c. But it is refreshing to stand upon common ground,—to find you for once willing to appeal to such satisfactory authority. We will waive the claim to spiritual guidance in this matter as proof of its truthfulness; there must be something more satisfactory than the bare word of the

(1) “Every soul,” says Zoroaster, “must pass through a sea of molten brass; to the holy this stream is like warm milk, but to the unholy very painful, consuming all the dross in them.”—Olshausen, 1 Cor. iii. 15. See other illustrations in Hall’s Purgatory, &c. Hagenbach’s History of Christian Doctrine, i., pp 217—18.

(2) Bossuet makes but slight mention of Purgatory, and bestows praise upon the Fathers for the great caution with which they expressed themselves upon this point.—*Ibid*, ii., p. 399.

Fathers. We shall be perfectly satisfied with proof from Holy Scripture. A single verse in which it is taught would disarm our hostility, and bind it to our hearts. We could do without the Fathers, if it is manifestly taught in the Word of God. The limits of this letter will not allow the investigation of every passage. I select, as far as I know, the strongest which Popes, Bishops, and Doctors have adduced in its support, and such as, I think, any candid Romanist would allow to be of this character.

The first I mention is Matt. xii. 32. Upon this the Rhemish annotators, and Milner, Wiseman, and a host of humble copyists, rest the doctrine. They maintain that some sins must be forgiven in the world to come; therefore, there is a Purgatory. Such is their singular conclusion from such premises. Will you kindly look at it for a moment? It will amply repay your closest examination. Let us grant the words of the Saviour teach us, that in the future world some sins will be *forgiven*. Does that warrant the conclusion, that there is a Purgatory, in which sins will be *punished*, not remitted? Is there no difference between the forgiveness of sin and the punishment of sin? Can we, by any logical legerdemain, demonstrate that a place of forgiveness is a place of punishment? You tell us, again and again, "that if the guilt were not remitted, the sinner would go to hell, and not to Purgatory." They go there to suffer, not to be forgiven. I am not bound to do more than show that your explanation is contradictory and absurd; but I ask you, for a moment, to look at the passage yourself, and tell me if it would naturally and obviously suggest such a dogma? The Redeemer is speaking of one of the most fearful sins of which man could be guilty. He says he would forgive all manner of sin and blasphemy against himself, but the sin against the Holy Ghost should never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in that which is to come.¹ His words declare its un-

(1) Many interpreters understand by the present and future, the Jewish and Christian Dispensations.—See Campbell and Olshausen *in loc.*

pardonable character. Two of the other evangelists expressly say so. Mark iii. 29, says, "Hath never forgiveness;" and Luke xiii. 10, "That it shall not be forgiven." In this sense many of the Fathers explain it. "*Whosoever*," says Jerome, "*shall ascribe the works of the Saviour to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, and shall say that the Son of God hath an unclean spirit, his blasphemy shall at no time be forgiven.*"¹ Athanasius says, "*Those who, seeing his miracles and divine actions, obstinately attributed them to the work of the devil, as the Pharisees did, committed a crime so enormous, that there is reason to fear such a sin is unpardonable.*"²

Stress is laid upon 1 Cor. iii. 10—15, upon no other ground, that I can conceive, than the allusion to fire. The critics of Rhemes say, "The foundation is Christ, and faith in him working by charity. The upper building may be either pure and perfect matter of gold, silver, and precious stones, which (according to the most authentic and probable exposition) be good works of charity, and all christian justice done by God's grace; or else wood, hay, stubble, which signify the manifold acts of man's infirmity and his venial sins, which more or less mixed and meddled with the better matter aforesaid, require more or less punishment or purgation at the day of our death. At which day, if by penance or other means in the church the said venial sins be beforehand cleansed, there shall need no purging at all, but they shall straight receive the reward due to them."³ Others hold the same opinion. Let us, for a moment, grant that this passage will bear such a construction. What then? Is this the Purgatory of Rome? Does your representation of this doctrine harmonise with this? There souls suffer; here the works of men. In the one place men are burnt; here they escape with loss. In the one case men gain by their purgatorial sufferings; here, by the fiery process, they

(1) Elliot, p. 252.

(2) Let. to Sarpion, apud Clarke Sac. Liter. i., p. 268. More of these may be found in Dr. Henry's Letters, &c.

(3) Rhemish Note *in loc.*

suffer loss. In your Purgatory only the imperfect, the venially guilty, suffer; here the builder with gold, as well as those of wood, &c., are alike tested. It is of universal application, and leaves none out who build upon the foundation. "The fire will try every man's work." In no single point can you find a feature conformable to your dogma. Besides, the principles upon which these interpretations are built would make the Word of God teach anything. Boasting in her infallibility, the Church of Rome flings to the winds the principles of common sense, and calms the doubts of her votaries by these lofty pretensions. What but this can account for the mixing of the figurative with the literal here? Gold, silver, wood, hay, &c., are figures, and mean men's actions; but fire is not; the introduction of a word on the part of the apostle, absolutely demanded for the completeness of his figure, will serve a purpose, and is declared to be a reality. Shame upon such meanness. The passage simply means, that the trying process through which all christians will have to pass, in the day of the Lord, will have the same effect upon their character, as fire would have upon a building composed of gold,¹ &c., if exposed to its action. Before me lies Chrysostom's exposition of this passage. Not a word about Purgatory, not an allusion occurs in it which can be forced, by any means, to favour it. The foundation is faith in Christ. "The building seems to me to be actions. Because the faith is not in one case less, in another more excellent, but the same in all those who truly believe. But in life there is room for some to be more diligent, others more slothful; some stricter, and others more ordinary; that some should have done well in greater things, others less; that the errors of some should have been more grievous, others less notable. On this account he saith gold, silver," &c. Upon the latter clause he thus remarks, "If any man lead an ill life with a right faith, his faith shall not shelter him from punishment, his work being burnt up. The phrase, 'shall be burnt up,' means, shall not endure the violence of the

(1) Many of the Fathers taught that this process would be by severe trials.

fire." And in his note upon the 16th verse, he refers the time of trial to the future. I scarcely need say, that in this opinion others agree, and refer the day to the last judgment.¹

Upon 1 Peter iii. 18—20, some Romanists lay great stress, though others admit extreme difficulty in giving to it a clear and consistent explanation. The Doctors of Rheims struggle hard to square the opinions of Augustine with theirs, and all avow, if it does not refer exactly to their modern notions of Purgatory, that it warrants the opinion that Christ did go and personally preach to the spirits in prison. Suppose we should admit this, does it follow that there is a Purgatory? Does the fact that Christ preached to them warrant the conclusion, that a priest or indulgences on earth will deliver souls from torment? Is it not more probable, that if he did it personally, it was once for all? and to take purgatorial notions from it, only shows how readily men will grasp at a shadow, when they are destitute of realities. Upon this dogma let us hear a distinguished Cardinal, expressing the opinion of the Church, "Before the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the gates of heaven were opened to none; and the departed souls of good men were detained in a certain place called, in Scripture, 'Abraham's bosom,'² and by the schools, *Limbus Patrum*, which is the uppermost part of hell, the lowest being the place of the damned, and next above that, Purgatory, and then the *Limbus Infantium*."³ It was into this *Limbus Patrum* that Christ descended. Happily for us, we have sworn to no such figment. We are perplexed with no creed which teaches that Christ descended into hell, and therefore have no motive to seek support for it here, or in any other portion of Sacred Scripture.⁴ We believe this text has

(1) Chrysostom on 1 Cor. Library of the Fathers, by Newman, vol. iv. Additional evidence may be found in Fulke's Notes.

(2) The Saviour represents Lazarus there; but not the Fathers. The Cardinal can always add when it suits him. The reader will find many curious details upon this dogma in the Gospel of Nicodemus, chaps. xiii. to xx.

(3) This was the place to which all unbaptized infants were consigned.

(4) The doctrine originally made no part of the so-called Apostles' Creed. See Justice Bailey's Edition of the Prayer Book.

no such allusion,—that it stands as much opposed to the Limbus Patrum of the Fathers, as we are confident it does to your more modern notions of Purgatory. The truth appears to us simple, obvious, and in fullest harmony with other parts of the inspired volume. The apostle teaches us, that by the same glorious Spirit in which or by which he was quickened, he did, by the ministry of Noah, preach to the inhabitants of the Old World, whose spirits, for their incredulity and great wickedness, are now shut up in prison. Everywhere the Scripture teaches us that Christ, by his Spirit, spoke to the Fathers by the prophets; and the text is only a declaration of the same fact in the case of Noah, with the introduction of other circumstances necessary to the completeness of the apostle's design in introducing it. Jerome says, "*He preached to the spirits put in prison, when the patience of God did wait in the days of Noah, bringing in the flood of waters upon the wicked.*" The same opinions are expressed by others, which the reader may see in the works referred to in the note.¹

Upon the doctrine of indulgences it is not necessary that I should say much. Their modern character,—their gross and notorious abuse,—their pecuniary value to the Church, are enough to expose them to the scorn of every intelligent person. I cannot do better than transfer to these pages the opinions of one of your own writers upon this awful abuse, which is ruining millions of souls. The Franciscan Berthold says:—

"*They are newly sprung up: for when I was a little child there was never one of them. They are called penny-preachers; the devil has no more favourite servants. For one of these goes out among the simple folk, and preaches and shouts till all weep who stand before him. And he says he has power from the Pope to take off all their sins for one mite. And he lies, saying, that man is thereby made free from sin before God; thus he crowns the devil every day with many thousand souls. You must give him nought; you must stand off from the fraud. The while you are giving to him, he is selling you to eternal death,*"² &c.

(1) Usher's Answer to a Jesuit, pp. 304-6. Elliot's Romanism, pp. 256-7.

(2) Gieseler, iii., p. 372. Cardinal Cajetan tells us, "There is no authority of Scripture, or of any Father, Greek or Latin, that brings them (indulgences) to our knowledge."—Notes on the Church, p. 161.

Already it will be obvious to you, from various allusions, that Purgatory is as much opposed to the opinions of the early church, as it has been shown to be to the infallible standard of the christian faith. Page after page could we introduce did our space allow us; but we must be content with a few examples. Clement not only has no allusion to such dogmas as you teach, but recognises only two worlds throughout his epistles. Again and again, in his third chapter, second Epistle, these are mentioned as the only states upon which men can enter at death. With Clement we may unite all the Apostolic Fathers. In their works we find nothing to countenance it. From various works of Cyprian now before me take the following. In his appeal to Demetrius on the Pestilence, he says,—

“Once gone from hence, there is no more space for repentance; no satisfaction can be accomplished; it is here that life is either lost or saved; it is here that eternal salvation is provided for, by the worship of God and the fruit of faith.”

That is not the doctrine of Purgatory. Nor is this, from his work on the Mortality :—

“It is for him to fear death that is not willing to go unto Christ; for it is for him to be unwilling to go to Christ who doth not believe that he beginneth to reign with Christ. For it is written, that the just doth live by faith. If thou be just, and livest by faith,—if thou dost truly believe in God, why, being to be with Christ, and being secure of the Lord’s promise, dost not thou embrace the message whereby thou art called unto Christ, and rejoice that thou wilt be rid of the devil? Simeon, of a surety, that just man, who was truly just, who kept the commandments of God in fulness of faith, when it had been divinely told him that he should not die before he had seen Christ, and the infant Christ had come with his mother into the temple, acknowledging in spirit that Christ was now born, concerning whom the prophecy had been made to him, and having seen whom, he knew that he was soon to die,—rejoicing, therefore, in the nearness now of death, and secure of being presently called away, he took the child into his arms, and, blessing God, cried out and said, ‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation;’—proving surely and bearing testimony, that then for the servants of God is peace, then free, then tranquil rest, when, rescued from these turmoils of earth, we gain the port of rest and of eternal security; when we put away this death, and come to immortality.”

In a paragraph breathing the highest confidence he says,—

“This pestilence, as to Jews, and heathens, and Christ’s enemies, it is a plague, so to the servants of God is it departure to their salvation. That without distinction between man and man, the just and the unjust die alike, think not, because of this, that the good and the wicked pass to the same end ; the righteous are called to their refreshing, the unrighteous hurried into punishment ; the faithful obtain a speedier deliverance, the unbelieving a speedier retribution.”¹

St. Pacian, in his treatise on Penance, urges only considerations drawn from heaven or hell to enforce his appeals.² In a work attributed to Justin Martyr he thus speaks :—

“After the departure of the soul out of the body, there is presently made a distinction between the just and the unjust. For they are brought by the angels to places fit for them ; the souls of the righteous to Paradise, where they have the commune and sight of angels and archangels, &c. ; the souls of the unjust to the place in hell.”

So Athanasius :—

“That is not death which befalleth the righteous, but a translation ; for they are translated out of this world into everlasting rest ; and as a man would go out of prison, so do the saints go out of this troublesome life into those good things that are prepared for them.”³

Let me add a beautiful extract from a fragment attributed to St. Patrick :—

“There be three habitations under the power of almighty God ; the first, the lowermost, and the middle ;—the highest whereof is called the kingdom of heaven, the lowermost is termed hell, the middle is named the present world, or the circuit of the earth. The extremes of these are altogether contrary one to another (for what fellowship can there be betwixt light and darkness, betwixt Christ and Belial?) but the middle hath some similitude with the extreme. For in this world there is a mixture of the bad and good together, whereas in the kingdom of God there are none bad, but all good ; but in hell there are none good, but all bad. And both those places are supplied out of the middle. For of the men of this world, some are lifted up to heaven, others are drawn down to hell, viz., like are joined to like, that is to say, good to good, and bad to bad ; just men to just angels, wicked

(1) Library of the Fathers, by Newman, vol. iii., pp. 215, 217, 223. In other paragraphs the reader will find the same truths, pp. 227—229. Cyprian writes like a man utterly ignorant of the Romish Purgatory.

(2) Works, p. 375. Lib. of Fathers, vol. iii. pt. ii. The Mother of Gregory Naz, when dying, said, “Be merciful unto me, O Christ, my King.” The dying words of Basil were, “Into thy hands I commit my spirit.”—Ullman, pp. 149, 151, 152. Gregory’s opinions will be found p. 147, 148.

(3) Usher’s Reply to a Jesuit, pp. 177—8.

*men to wicked angels ; the servants of God to God, the servants of the devil to the devil,"*¹ &c.

So far from the assertion of the Tridentine Fathers being correct, it has been shown again and again that it is the opposite of this. Some of your own writers have admitted this. Bishop Fisher is amongst this class; and another says,—

"That in the ancient writers there is almost no mention of Purgatory, especially in the Greek writers, and therefore by the Grecians it is not believed until this day."²

Chrysostom and others believed in the fiction of a Limbus Patrum, but when the doctrine of Purgatory was attempted to be forced upon them by the Latins, they manfully and perseveringly resisted the unscriptural dogma.

"Others thought that there would be a mighty conflagration, enveloping the whole face of nature, on the consummation of all things. Through its flames they thought every child of Adam, even the blessed Virgin not excluded, would be compelled to pass in their way to the judgment-seat of Christ. The most holy of God's elect would accomplish this fiery passage rapidly, and with little or nothing of distress. Greater sinners would long have to buffet with the flames, and would smart severely under their effects; whilst those who died in impenitence would find their fiery purgation utterly hopeless."³

Upon these crude notions you will see how easily prayers *for* the dead, not *to* the dead, would follow, and how fully it would prepare the way for a mind so thoroughly weak, dishonest, and superstitious, as was that of Gregory, for the introduction of the Romish Purgatory.⁴

Probably the earliest Christian monuments, illustrating the condition of the dead, are found in the Catacombs. The examination of these subterraneous tombs, and the arrangement of their remains, have been all but under exclusive Papal influence. Yet it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find there a single thing favourable to Purgatory.

(1) See Usher's Religion of the Ancient Irish, pp. 23—24.

(2) Usher's Jesuit, p. 181. Notes on the Church, p. 161.

(3) Soame's Lect., pp. 350—1.

(4) The reader is referred for fuller information upon the progress and history of this dogma, to the very accurate pages of Neander and Hagenbach.

"In the Lapidavian Gallery," says Maitland, "selected and arranged under Papal superintendence, there are no prayers for the dead (unless the forms, 'May you live,' 'May God refresh you,' be so construed): no addresses to the Virgin Mary, nor to the Apostles, or earlier Saints: and with the exception of 'eternal sleep,' 'eternal home,' &c., no expression contrary to the plain sense of Scripture."¹

Upon the manifold abuses to which this doctrine is liable, of the gross and superstitious purposes to which it has been perverted, of the source of pecuniary wealth it opens to the priesthood, and the unlimited power it places within their reach, I touch not here. I wish to deal with it without exciting unnecessary hostility;² but to its delusive and dangerous tendency I would invoke your special attention. To my mind, and pardon me if I say it should be to yours after the statement I have given, it appears a delusion and a fraud. It perils the interests of millions, and imposes upon them in matters of the most vital and unutterable moment. Based upon the profoundest ignorance of the dignity and perfection of the sacrificial death of the Redeemer, it introduces an agency which he must repudiate because it is insulting to his majesty. He has atoned for all sin by one sacrifice. No sorrow to which it exposed us, no punishment which it could inflict, but he has borne. The moral government of God was fully vindicated, and his justice amply satisfied, in the sacrifice of the Saviour. "By one offering," is the concurrent testimony of inspired Scripture, "*he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*" "*Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*" Read the Holy Word for yourself, and you will find that it is full of this doctrine. It unites the whole, and gives harmony and consistency to God's plan of saving the guilty. No punishment, no condemnation, no satisfaction, is demanded from the sinner who believes in Jesus. By faith in Him, "*he is justified freely from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses.*" And "*there is therefore*

(1) Church of the Catacombs, p. 14. It is right to say, that in a note he mentions one exception.

(2) Ample details upon these topics will be found in Elliot's Romanism, &c.

now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

Let it be remembered, also, that the same inspired writer speaks in the most positive manner of the unalterable condition of man after death. Heaven is the immediate state of all who fall asleep in Jesus; hell is the doom of the finally impenitent. United to the Saviour by living faith, death is only the unclothing of the spirit from its gross and polluted habiliments, that it may shine in the spotless purity of the Redeemer's righteousness, before the throne of God and the Lamb. Be assured, *"that as death leaves us judgment will find us;"* *"I have a desire to depart,"* said the apostle, *"and to be with Jesus, which is far better."* *"Absent from the body, present with the Lord."* *"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."* If these statements of inspired writ be true; if *"Christ hath loved the church, and given himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish;"* if by his atonement alone we obtain pardon and eternal life; then the doctrine of Purgatory, indulgences, and human merit, is alike derogatory to the Saviour, opposed to his revealed will, and ruinous to the souls of men. On every ground the peril is fearful, because the doctrine is soothing to human pride, presents a premium for crime, and is therefore antagonistic to that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord."

LETTER VII.

THE DOCTRINES OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE MASS.

I have had occasion already to touch upon many singular matters in the system you profess, to show their influence upon the church and the world. We have seen their formalism, their powerlessness in calling forth or sustaining anything like vital or intelligent religion, and their eminent adaptation to uphold priestism, and the most complete moral and mental bondage in the world. I now ask your attention to another dogma, surpassing every other in the loftiness of its claims, the mysterious grandeur of its nature, and supplying the most ample field for all the dramatic power of the priesthood to play upon the imaginations and the unbridled superstitions of the people. You will anticipate my allusion. Rome has nothing higher. Her wonder-working power exhausts itself in *Transubstantiation* and the *Mass*,¹ and her unapproached supremacy must be manifest, in producing from a little wafer the Saviour of the World. In this wonderful, awful, mysterious result, we have, says one,—

“A perfect epitome or abridgment of the works of Almighty God, and of the Old and New Testaments, comprising, briefly and summarily, all that is contained therein. The Trinity, Unity, Eternity, Omnipotence, Glory, Majesty, Infinity, and Excellency of Almighty God. The creation of heaven and earth, angels, men, and all creatures. The incarnation, nativity, preaching, miracles, life, death, passion, resurrection, and ascension, of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and consequently, our redemption, vocation, justification, sanctification, and glorification, together with whatsoever else concerneth the glory of God or the salvation of men.”²

(1) The deacon dismissed the people with the words, *Ite missa est*, “Go, you are dismissed,” and thus finished the mass, or *missa*; for so the sacred liturgy came to be called from this ceremony of dismissal, &c.—Way to Heaven, p. 126. Other explanations are given by Higham, Expo. Mass, A.D., 1652.

(2) Exposition of the Mass, by J. Higham, p. 10.

A wondrous power this must be, by which your priests can not only condense into a small piece of bread the work of creation, the mystery of grace, but Deity itself. Everything about it, to me, is mysterious and awful: a mystery which no one can penetrate, which no one reveals, and about which, I am only consoled by the conviction, that God nowhere commands me to believe it. With my present views, I am forced to think that the adoration you pay to the wafer is an idolatry of the grossest and most revolting form. I cannot help it. Viewed from my standing point, I am led to the conclusion that you worship, with Divine honour, a piece of bread! If I am mistaken, I am open to conviction, and shall be glad to listen to any evidence you may offer on this theme. I will use your own devotional writers. I will place before you the decisions of your own Councils and Popes; and it is their representations with which I intend to deal in this letter. The following is from the highest authority:—

“And since the same Christ, who once offered himself by his own blood on the altar of the cross, is contained in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, and offered without blood, the holy council teaches that this sacrifice is *REALLY PROPITIATORY, AND MADE BY CHRIST HIMSELF*; so that if we approach God contrite and penitent, with a true heart and sincere faith, with fear and reverence, we ‘obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.’ (Heb. iv. 16.) For, assuredly, God is appeased by this oblation, bestows grace and the gift of repentance, and forgives all crimes and sins how great soever; for the sacrifice which is now offered by the ministry of the priests is *one and the same* which Christ then offered on the cross, only the mode of offering is different. And the fruits of that bloody oblation are plentifully enjoyed by means of this unbloody one; so untrue is it that the latter derogates from the glory of the former. Wherefore it is, properly, according to apostolic tradition, not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of living believers, but also for the dead in Christ who are not thoroughly purified.”¹

In the Creed of Pope Pius, the mass is thus mentioned:—

“I confess, likewise, that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrifice of the Eucharist is *truly, really*, and sub-

(1) Council of Trent, Dec. on Mass, chap. ii.

stantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation." "I confess, also, that under either kind alone, whole and entire, Christ and a true sacrament is realised."¹

These dogmas, so briefly illustrated here, have been amplified in every variety of detail in your devotional writings. These are prepared for the popular mind, and intended, from their price, to be read by all your people. Here, then, we shall find your real opinions, the staple and core of your religious teaching. I select a few:—

"Ah, what a miracle of love! what a wonderful condescension of God towards man! A God, an omnipotent God, who has heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool, to whom the angels minister, and who has the stars of heaven for his crown! An all-wise God, who, seated on a throne blazing with light, sees the most secret things, surveys the highest realms, and penetrates the lowest depths! A God so immense that heaven itself cannot contain him! A God so great, so sublime, so powerful, becomes the food and the drink of man, that he may never be separated from them. He whom the world cannot circumscribe becomes our captive. Ah, my God! my God! what things are these."²

Not less explicit is the following from the same Italian priest:—

"I believe, O my God, that in receiving the blessed sacrament I shall receive thyself, body and blood, soul and divinity;—Thou, the only begotten Son of the Father;—Thou, the splendour of his glory;—Thou, the image and figure of his substance;—Thou, the Saviour of the world;—Thou, the Man-God! Yes, the same Jesus, who, ascending into heaven, took his seat at the right hand of his Father, and who will one day come to judge the living and the dead; yes, that same Jesus will rest upon my tongue, and descend into my throat this morning, when I shall receive the consecrated host."³

We are told by another that,—

"It is the same sacrifice, because on the altar, as on Calvary, the victim is one and the same, namely, Christ; he, also, who offers the

(1) Creed of Pius IV. See Catechism of the Council for further details. "When are we bound to communicate? When we are in danger of death, and once at least every year, and that at Easter."—Serbatis's Cate., p. 118.

(2) *Anima Devota*, by Paganì, pp. 16—17.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 230. Some derive this word from *ab ostia*, a door; others from *ab hosta*, an enemy.—Higham, *Expo. Mass.*, p. 268. It is more likely from *hostia*, a victim, or sacrifice.

sacrifice is one and the same, namely, Christ, who is represented by the priest his minister."

"In communion we receive the true body of Christ, the same which was fastened to the cross, and which is now in heaven; we also therein receive his blood, his soul, and his divinity."

"My Lord Christ! I firmly believe that I am going to receive by this communion, thy body, thy blood, thy soul, and thy divinity! I believe it because thou hast said it, and I am ready to lay down my life in defence of this truth."¹

"The mass is a sacrifice in which Christ, by the ministry of the priest, perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross, by offering himself for us to God, as a victim, under the appearance of bread and wine."

"The sacrifice of the mass is in reality the same as that of the cross; the only difference is in the manner in which it is offered."²

In harmony with these we find the teaching of the sainted Liguori:—

"God himself could not enable man to perform anything greater than the celebration of the mass."³ "In a word, as the passion of Christ was sufficient to save the whole world, so is a single mass sufficient to save it."⁴

"Consider, then, my soul, that the most sacred victim whom thou art about to sacrifice, is the same Lord who shed his blood and laid down his life for thee."⁵

"The Ven. F. Antonio di Cabellis said, 'When I celebrate and hold in my hands Christ, I obtain from him whatever I desire.'"⁶

In like manner teaches the celebrated Kempis:—

"A wonderful thing it is and worthy of faith, and exceeding all human understanding, that thou, O Lord, my God, true God and true man, art contained whole and entire under a small form of bread and wine,—without being consumed, art eaten by the consumer."⁷

"And as often as thou sayest or hearest mass, it ought to seem to thee as great, new, and delightful, as if Christ that same day, first descending into the Virgin's womb, had been made man; or hanging on the cross, was suffering and dying for the salvation of mankind."⁸

Not only is the Saviour present at the time of consecration, but is imprisoned in the wafer for any period, according to the wishes or decision of the priest.

"Does Christ continue to be present when the mass is over in the blessed Eucharist which is kept in the tabernacle? Yes, he does.

(1) Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, pp. 233, 237, 243.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 233.

(3) *Sacerdos Sanctificatus*, &c., by Liguori, p. 7.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 9.

(5) *Ibid*, p. 63.

(6) *Ibid*, p. 75.

(7) Kempis's *Im. of Christ*. Book iv., c. 2.

(8) *Ibid*, Book iv. c. 2.

"Why is the blessed Eucharist preserved in this manner? It is kept in the church to be adored by the faithful, and to be taken to the sick who are in need of it."¹

We find in substance the same illustration, nearly the same phraseology, in the "Manual for the Ursuline Convents," and "The Path to Paradise."² But some others go beyond this. Not content with holding the Saviour imprisoned in the morsel of bread, they actually leave the universe without a Governor, and heaven without a God, whilst by the priest he is carried, to use the elegant language of one of your writers, "into every filthy and disgusting place, into cabins the lowest and poorest, into the most pestilential hovels, and into the most horrid prisons."

"Awake, my soul! renew thy faith, which teaches thee that an incarnate God lies concealed in the most adorable sacrament, viz., that same Jesus who was born an infant in the stable at Bethlehem,—that Jesus who rose triumphantly from the grave,—that Jesus who now sits at the right hand of his Father,—that Jesus is in the consecrated host. O Faith! what more can be said? A God is ready to come into my heart, to become my food! A God —." "My Jesus, infallible truth, relying upon thy word, I believe that thou art in this consecrated host, which contains thy body, thy soul, and thy divinity. I believe also that when I receive thee I receive, by committance, the Father and the Holy Ghost."

"Behold the King of kings, the Lord of lords, thy friend, thy father, and thy spouse; behold the delight of paradise, the joy of heaven, God himself; behold the most adorable Trinity in this divine sacrament."³

Christ is not only present upon the altar, in all the living realities of his nature, but he is there for the most important of all ends. With some of them, I assure you, singular thoughts, suggested by these dogmas, will link themselves. We are told that,—"*It is a victim of expiation of such value as would suffice to atone for all the iniquities of millions of worlds, and that in a super-*

(1) Sarbati's Cat., p. 110.

(2) Ursuline Manual, p. 74.

(3) Anima Devota, pp. 93, 117. "Believe with perfect faith that you are going to receive that great God who with a single glance has power to shake the earth to its very foundations, to dissolve the mountains into smoke, and to arrest the stars in their course. Believe that you are about to receive the powerful God," and much more of this.—*Ibid*, p. 295.

abundant manner."¹ And yet, on one occasion, forty thousand times was this victim offered for the relief of a single soul in Purgatory.² But pardon this. I only glance at it here, as it will claim attention in another part. The following avowals are distinct and unmistakeable. Paul tells us that "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God."³ Not so, say your teachers. Every time this bread is consecrated it is the same victim; every time the priest elevates the host it is the same sacrifice. Look at the following:—

"For Thou wert not content that thy Son, having once offered himself upon the cross for our sins, should appear before Thee in our behalf in the sanctuary of heaven only, &c., but wouldest also have him to be daily offered to Thee on earth, by the functions of priests, for the expiation of our sins,"⁴ &c.

Another, and a saint of distinguished eminence, tells us,—

"That in every mass is rendered the work of redemption, so that if Jesus had never died on the cross, the celebration of a single mass would obtain for the world the same benefits as were obtained by the death of our Redeemer."⁵

Saint Bonaventura says, "That the Son of God, in the mass, confers a benefit upon the world not less than that which he conferred in taking upon himself our human nature." . . . "So that, as the learned teach, if Christ had never appeared in the world, a priest, by pronouncing the words of consecration, would bring him down from heaven upon earth, according to that celebrated sentence of St. Augustine: '*O veneranda Sacerdotum dignitas, in quorum incensibus, velut in vetero Virginis Filius Dei incarnatur.*'" (Psalm xxvii.) "The angelic Doctor teaches that the mass procures for man the same benefits and salvation as the sacrifice of the cross procured for him."⁶

The power by which this wonderful change is effected is in the priest. His ability is all but omnipotent.

(1) Ursuline Manual, p. 75.

(2) Purgatory Opened, p. 5.

(3) Heb. x. 12—14.

(4) Poor Man's Manual of Devotion, p. 80.

(5) Sacerdos Sanctificatus, by Saint Liguori, p. 64.

(6) *Ibid*, pp. 10, 11.

St. Liguori says, "*That in celebrating he becomes, in a certain way, master of Jesus upon the altar.*" From a small wafer he produces the real body, and blood, and divinity of the Son of God. Nay, even God himself. Again and again we are assured that, under the form of bread and wine, the omnipotent, eternal, and glorious Being who fills immensity with his presence is confined.¹ The following may be taken as a fair specimen of this awfully arrogant assumption:—

"Does not the miraculous power imparted by Christ to the priest, of consecrating his own body and blood, strike you with amazement? What tongue of man or angel could ever describe a power so immense? And how could we have dared to conceive that the voice of man should possess such stupendous power as to call down from heaven the Son of God himself? To remove the mountains from their places, to prescribe limits to the ocean, to make the heavens revolve, would require the exertion of an omnipotent power; and yet, behold here effected by an humble minister a miracle of a far superior order. It may be said that the power of the priest is equal to that first fiat by which God drew everything from its original nothingness, or even to that other fiat by which the Blessed Virgin received into her womb the eternal Word of God. Yea, the agency of the priest, in the sacrifice of mass, may be said to surpass that of the Blessed Virgin; for she only submitted to conceive the material body of Christ, of her virginal blood, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; whereas the voice of the celebrating minister is employed, by the invisible High Priest, as the direct means for converting the substance of bread and wine into his adorable body and blood."²

Let us now mark the process by which this unparalleled change is effected. Everything preludious to it is perfect in its adaptation. Its scenic character is matchless. It has all the forms of the most thrilling drama. Every feeling is called forth, and brought into fullest exercise. The preparatory devotions are impassioned to an extreme, and their influence must be exciting, when there is common honesty.³ You are taught, moreover, that heaven

(1) *Anima Devota*, p. 295.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 228. G. Biel says, "Who ever saw such a thing? He that created me (if I may so speak), has given me power to create him; and he that created me without help, is created by my means."—*Can. Mass*, Taylor, p. 287.

(3) See the last quoted work, and the Poor Man's Manual of Devotion. For specimens of rant and enthusiasm the reader may consult "The Oratory of the Faithful Soul," by a French Abbé. For works suited to an earlier period of Romanism in England, he may read the "Garden of the Soul," the "Path to Paradise," &c.

as well as earth concentrates its attention upon the altar, and exhausts its interest in this scene. The Virgin, the saints, the hosts of seraphim, nay, the Trinity itself, are hanging around this scene with unutterable interest.¹ Expectation is upon the stretch, and no wonder,—the Redeemer of the universe is about to descend at the bidding of a priest; the Creator of worlds is about to appear.² Who would not be awe-struck? What intellect could be powerful enough to withstand such a whirlwind of passionate emotion? The proceedings at mass cannot diminish this. The change of dress, every part pregnant with some mystic meaning; the rolling incense, diffusing its fragrance around;³ the genuflections of the presiding minister, with his attendants; the sound of music, at intervals, penetrating hearts already subdued and awed by these symbols;—these, and a multitude of other signs prepare us for this solemn drama. This is its form:—

“The people now reverently attending to the grand act (and for this purpose a bell is here sounded), the priest praying in a low and under tone, and bowing down in profound supplication, &c., he takes the host into his hands, and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he blesses it with the sign of the Cross, saying, ‘*Hoc est corpus meum*,’ and straightway kneeling down, he adores the sacred bread, now made the true flesh of Christ; then, standing up, he raises the sacred host in view of the people, and replacing on the corporal, again adores.”

Then the same process is followed with the cup,⁴ and

(1) “Such is the excellence and sublime dignity of this sacrament, that, even in heaven itself, there is no more exalted act of worship. In this the Church on earth vies with the heavenly Jerusalem; in this the very angels of God, envying as it were the blessedness of man, come down from heaven to assist at the divine ministry of the priests of God on earth. Herein the most ecstatic devotion is satisfied to more than fulness.”—Way to Heaven, p. 118. *Anima Devota*, &c.

“I am going to consecrate,” says John of Avila, “to call down the body and blood of the Son of Man; I am going to take him into my hands, to speak with him, and treat with him, and to receive him into my breast.”—*Sacerdos*, p. 17.

(2) Devout Exposition of the Mass, &c.

(3) Then, taking the censor into his hands, he incenses the oblation, saying, “May this incense which thou hast blessed, O Lord, ascend to thee, and may thy mercy descend upon us.” After this he incenses the altar on every part, saying, “Let my prayer ascend, O Lord, like incense before thee in thy sight, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.” The incense has been previously blessed.—Way to Heaven, p. 161.

(4) A writer explaining these mysteries, especially for the benefit of English Protestants, varies the form with the cup, and thus impiously supplements the language of the Redeemer. “For this is the chalice of my blood of the New and Eternal Testament mystery of faith, which shall be shed for you and for many, to the remission of sins.”—The Explanation of the Mass, p. 39.

you again bow down and adore it,—

“The word made flesh for love of man,
His word turns back to flesh again,
And wine to blood, unseemly sense
By virtue of Omnipotence :
And here the faithful rest secure,
Whilst God can teach, and faith ensure.”¹

But we have not yet exhausted this mystery. Wonders, if possible, more startling and incomprehensible, follow in rapid succession. You reverently kneel, “holding a towel before you, with your head erect, your mouth open wide, your tongue a little advanced so as to rest on your under lip, that the priest may convey the blessed Sacrament into your mouth.”² Now, that which may stick to your mouth, or which you may swallow with some difficulty, is the body of Christ whole and entire. Not only so, but in every host. If fifty have been consecrated, there are fifty Redeemers, for he is whole and entire in each. Nay, if in every Romish chapel throughout the world, the process of consecration were to go on at the same time, he would be whole and entire in every wafer. Nay, if those wafers were broken into a thousand parts, into as many crumbs as possible, he would be whole and entire, body, soul, divinity, and all, in the smallest fragment! This is taught from every altar, and inculcated upon your children. Do I misrepresent you? Let us see :—

“When our Saviour is under the Sacramental species, does he leave heaven? No, he does not: he is at the same time in heaven, and in the most Holy Sacrament.”

“Is our Saviour present in all the consecrated Hosts in the world?

(1) “In former times the canon of the mass was pronounced publicly, but it is now pronounced in secret, because some shepherds one day singing it for recreation, and laying bread upon a stone, it was turned into flesh at the end of the words; but for this impiety, God struck them with fire from heaven.”—Higham, p. 198. *Pange Lingua. Ursuline Manual*, p. 429.

(2) The person who is to receive the blessed sacrament, must be also fasting, at least from midnight.—*Garden of the Soul*, p. 257. *Poor Man's Manual*, p. 129.

“In the early times of Christianity the faithful were allowed to take the blessed sacrament from the holy table, and carry it away to their own homes; and if the Church, indignant at the irreverence which arose in the course of years, through the languor of faith and coldness of charity, had not prohibited the practice, Christ would have allowed himself to be so treated to this day.”—*Anima Devota*, &c., p. 88.

Yes; by virtue of his Divine Omnipotence, to which nothing is impossible. When the Host is broken, is the body of Christ also broken? No; but only the species of bread."

"In what part of the Host does the body of Christ remain? It remains entire in all the divided parts."

"Is the body of Christ as much in a small particle of the Host, as in the entire Host? Yes; it is as much in the smallest particle of the Host, as in the entire Host."¹

And then you sing,—

"Whenever this blessed Sacrament shall lie
In different parcels broke before our eye,
Then waver not, remember there remains
Under each fragment what the whole contains,
The same sweet Jesus who in glory reigns."²

I say nothing here upon your partial participation in this Sacrament. The cup is withheld from all the laity, with one exception,³ in manifest and unquestioned opposition to the gospel and past history.⁴ To a graver topic I would ask your attention. There is no mistake about the homage you offer to the Host. The Council of Trent places this beyond all doubt. It is the highest which you can render: that "*which is due to the true God.*" "*For we believe,*" say the Fathers, "*the same God to be present in it, of whom the Eternal Father, when he introduced him into the world, thus speaks, 'And let all the angels of God worship him.'*" In harmony with this, is the following salutation used at Stoneyhurst:—

"Hail, Salvation of the world, Word of the Father, Sacred Host, true Life and real Flesh, true God and real Man, Body of our Lord Jesus Christ; Thou who didst form me of the dust of the earth, have mercy upon me a sinner. Amen."

I could select prayers almost innumerable,⁵ but my space forbids it; still I will trespass with the following

(1) Dr. A. R. Serbati's Cate., dedicated to Bp. Ullathorn, p. 107. See, also, the Catechism of the Diocese of Paris, pp. 229—233.

(2) Missal, p. 527.

(3) The King of the French was allowed to communicate in both kinds.

(4) Bossuet is forced to admit that this was the practice in early times. See Protest., in vol. ii., lib. xi., s. 12. Card. Bellarmine shows that, instead of communicating once a year, as the Church enjoins now, the Primitive Church frequently, if not daily, did this, and many of the Fathers vindicate it.—Art of Dying Well, p. 87.

(5) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, p. 198.

Litany,—let it be remembered, addressed to the Host :¹—

“ Lord, have mercy upon us ; Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, hear us ; Christ, graciously hear us. God the Father of Heaven, God the Son, Redeemer of the world, God the Holy Ghost, Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy upon us. Living bread which camest down from heaven, our hidden God and Saviour, Wheat of the Elect, Wine from which the flower of Virginity springs in our hearts, Bread, which dost nourish us, and art the delight of kings, have mercy upon us. Perpetual Sacrifice, Clean Oblation, Lamb without spot, Table where purity itself is given us, Food of Angels, Manna whose powers and strength are interior, Remembrance of the wonders of God, Super-substantial Bread, Word made Flesh, Thou who dost dwell with us, Holy Host, Chalice of Benediction, Mystery of Faith, August and Venerable Sacrament, Most Holy of Sacrifices, True Propitiation for the living and the dead, Heavenly Antidote by which we are preserved from sin, Most Wonderful of all Miracles, Most Sacred Commemoration of our Lord’s Passion, Gift surpassing all gifts in fulness, Principal Memorial of Divine Love, Most Sacred and August Mystery, Torrent of Divine Bounty, Medicine of Immortality, Tremendous and Life-giving Sacrament, Bread made Flesh by the Omnipotence of the Word, Unbloody Sacrifice, Our Food and Our Guest, Most Sweet Banquet, at which ministering angels are present, Sacrament of Piety, Link of Charity, Priest and Victim, Spiritual Sweetness drawn at the Fountain-head, Refection of Holy Souls, Viaticum of those who die in the Lord, Pledge of future Glory, have mercy upon us.”² ‘Have mercy upon us,’ follows every sentence, but for the sake of space we have omitted it.

No one can be surprised that scenes like these concentrate upon them the interest of all worlds. The Hosts of Heaven, the Virgin, and all the Saints, gather around the altar every time the consecrated Host is elevated, absorbed in the profound mysteries.³ It does not matter what absurdities may be involved in these teachings of your authorised priesthood : they may teach you what is utterly and for ever impossible, still it is believed. Her ladyship cannot, with her attendants, hover over the altar in Aubro’-Street, and, at the same time, hang with deepest

(1) Visits to Holy Sacraments, pp. 189—90. Others in the Poor Man’s Manual, pp. 93—6.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 306—8. With important variations in Ursuline Manual, pp. 366—8.

(3) “ You behold around the priest who celebrates, and the altar upon which Christ is present, a multitude of angels. Imagine that you see host after host coming down from heaven with canticles of joy to offer profound adoration to their King. Imagine that you hear the sweet melody of their celestial strains, as they descend in legions to pay homage to their Sovereign Lord.”—*Anima Devota*, p. 296. Imagine this going on at every altar in the world !!

interest upon the lips of his Eminence of Westminster, without being more than the daughter of the Deity. Whatever else she may do, the Celestial Queen cannot fill two places at the same time, without being invested with omnipresence. However these may affect you, their absurdities, their contradictions, their worse than these, are apparent to others in the most striking degree. Nor is it less worthy of notice, that the effects resulting from this wondrous performance of the priest are equally remarkable. It is natural. No man could receive a God without the most marvellous results. Your works are full of them; and without a glance at these, my illustrations of this dogma would be far from complete. I select a few; but, pray, do not hold me responsible for the contradictions which may appear.

"The blessed Eucharist is a powerful weapon to fight against the temptations of the devil, to repel his assaults, and triumph over hell. St. Thomas says, that the devils, seeing us united by means of the blessed Sacrament, and, as it were, incorporated with Jesus our Head, and our invincible Leader, fear, tremble, fly, and cease to molest us with their suggestions; or, if they do assault us, their temptations have little force, and are easily overcome."¹

I scarcely dare conjecture, but I cannot understand the mysterious conduct of the Church. With such blessed results from communion, how is it that she insists on it only once a year? Would more frequent communion make the people more holy? Would there, by this potent aid, be less souls to save from Purgatory, and, therefore, less gain to the Church? Pardon these vagaries.

"Servius tells us that St. Catherine of Sienna passed the whole of Lent without any food but that which she received at the holy table. A virgin at Rome, named Felicia, was supported during five Lents solely by this bread of angels. In Switzerland, a holy hermit, named Nicola, during a course of fifteen years, received no other nourishment but the body of Christ in the Sacrament. St. Liberale, Bishop of Athens, was accustomed to receive every Sunday at the altar the precious flesh and blood of his Redeemer, and passed the entire week without any other aliment, all the time continuing strong and well."²

"St. Francis de Salis calls it 'the sun of spiritual exercises,—the centre of the christian religion,—the heart of devotion, and the soul of

(1) *Anima Devota*, p. 425.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 113.

piety,—a mystery so ineffable, as to comprise within itself that abyss of divine charity when God communicates himself really to us, and, in a special manner, replenishes our souls with spiritual graces and favours.”¹

“The choirs of the triumphant and militant church unite themselves to our Lord in this divine action, that with him, in him, and through him, they may gain the heart of God our Father, and make his mercy all our own.”²

I will only add another, for the sake of contrast. “*Christ, in the blessed Sacrament, unites himself not only to our souls by means of his grace, but to our bodies by means of his flesh.*”³ And yet, in direct opposition to all this, Augustine, as quoted by the same, represents the Saviour as saying to a faithful christian, “I am the food of the great. Increase in charity, and thou shalt eat me. THOU SHALT CHANGE ME NOT INTO THY FLESH, AS THY FOOD IS CHANGED INTO THY BODY, BUT THOU SHALT BE CHANGED INTO ME.”⁴ Other effects, still more marvellous, if possible, than feasting on Deity, and incorporating the flesh of Jesus with our own, have distinguished this Sacrament. I could fill page after page with the accounts of the miracles which have attested this profoundest of all mysteries. Take the following as a specimen. Never were such wondrous means employed before for such results.

“The venerable Father Alvaraz saw Jesus in the ever blessed Sacrament, with his hands full of graces, seeking to whom he might distribute them.”

“Our Lord showed himself to St. Catharine of Sienna, as a furnace of love, from which issued torrents of Divine flames, which spread over the whole world, and made the saint wonder how men could live without burning with love, at the sight of the great love God bears them.”⁵

In the Path to Paradise this lady is also mentioned.

“St. Catherine, when she communicated, saw in the hands of the priest, as it were, a burning flame, which figured that immense love which burns in the heart of Jesus towards our souls; and the Lord said to her, ‘See, my daughter, with what love I desire to be with you, in order that your love may always increase, and that your will

(1) Missal for the Laity, p. 31. (2) *Ibid*, p. 31.

(3) *Anima Devota*, p. 60. (4) *Ibid*, p. 143.

(5) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, pp. 24—42.

may be united with mine. I became flesh, and left you myself, that you might receive me as food, be transformed into me, and be nourished by me."¹

The author of the book of "Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus," says,—

"One day, as Margaret Alacoque was praying before the blessed Sacrament, Jesus permitted that she should see his sacred heart, on a throne of flames, crowned with thorns, and surmounted by a cross; and he said to her, 'Here is the heart which has so loved mankind, which has spared nothing, but has even consumed itself, to show them its love; yet in return I receive from most nothing but ingratitude, irreverence, coldness, sacrilege, and contempt, in this Sacrament of love. And to make this yet more painful, their hearts have been consecrated to me.'"²

The blessed Leonardo related, that when an impious person was once receiving the Communion from a holy priest, instead of the Host, a beautiful infant was perceived in his hands, which resisted, with all its powers, being placed in the mouth of such a wretch."³

I can readily believe the latter part of this statement, however incredulous I may be of what follows. It appears that "our Lord and Saviour has frequently and miraculously satisfied the pious and ardent desires of his servants, by imparting to them in effect, what they sought only in spirit. Such was his conduct towards blessed Clare of Montefalco, St. Catherine of Sienna, and St. Liduina, to whom he distributed the Holy Communion with his own hand" (it does not appear with which hand, whether from the Consecrated Host, or one of another body which he had, separately and actually from that, in

(1) Path to Paradise, pp. 93—4.

(2) Visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, p. 11. Liguori tells us, that it once appeared in the form of a beautiful infant, in the celebration of mass in the Chapel Royal of St. Lewis, but the warrior saint refused to go to see it. At another time, the Host appeared suddenly in the air, surrounded by extraordinary light, and placed itself upon the head of a child.—*Alima Devota*, p. 299, 318.

(3) There was a recluse of the desert who doubted this dogma. His brethren prayed for his conversion and were heard. "Next Lord's-day they stood together at church, upon the same cushion, the recluse being in the middle, and their eyes were opened; and when the bread was put upon the holy table, it appeared to them like a little boy. And when the Presbyter put forth his hands to break the bread, behold, the angel of the Lord came down from heaven with a knife and stabbed the little boy, and let his blood run into the cup! And when the Presbyter broke the bread in little pieces, the angel also cut little pieces from the body of the child! And when they came to take of the holy elements, the recluse's portion was a goblet of human flesh!"—Quoted by Osborne. *Doctrinal Errors*, pp. 113—14. *Anima Devota*, p. 272. Other examples may be found, pp. 299, 307, 317, 318.

heaven);¹ "towards St. Bonaventura and St. Stanislaus Koska, who were communicated by the hands of angels; and towards St. Sylvester, who received the blessed Sacrament from his Virgin Mother."²

We have already seen some examples of the wondrous power of the Consecrated Host, but an example or two of a somewhat different kind may interest the reader. Gregory of Tours tells us, that on one occasion, "*the pax with the Consecrated Host leaped out of the deacon's hand, and fled through the air to the altar,*" because the man was polluted. Gregory, though present, did not see it. Only three women and a priest were so honoured.³ A child is cast forth from his grave, probably by demoniacal influences, and is only persuaded to rest in quiet by a piece of the consecrated bread being placed upon his breast. Two noble women, who had been excommunicated for speaking scandal, were nevertheless buried in the church; but every time mass was offered, their spirits were seen to rise from the tombs and glide out of the church. It was only after an oblation had been "immolated" for them that they slept in peace.⁴ A boy monk, who loved his parents too fondly, and stole away to visit them, was not merely struck dead, but the holy earth would not retain his body, and cast it forth with indignation. Benedict commanded the Holy Eucharist to be placed upon his body, and then it reposed in the grave. It was very similar with certain nuns whom Benedict had excommunicated. They were buried in the church at death, but every time the deacon commanded those to retire who did not communicate, their bodies were seen to return from the graves out of the church. The compassionate Benedict offered an oblation for them, and ever after they rested in peace.⁵ For all purposes its power was irresistible. But enough of this. On the use of the

(1) Path to Paradise, wherein a somewhat different version of St. Catherine will be found, pp. 93—94.

(2) Anima Devota, p. 331.

(3) See Milman's History of L. Christianity, vol. i., B. iii., p. 288.

(4) See Gregory, Dia. ii., pp. 22—23. Milman, i., p. 473.

5) See Gregory's Dialogue i., p. 10. Milman, i., p. 422.

Host in masses for the dead,¹ I have already touched, and have now, I think, placed before you a fair and impartial view of these appalling dogmas.

I cannot help suspecting that there is some design in these representations. A mystery the uninitiated cannot penetrate. Evidently thousands of the priests do not believe a word about it. Judging from your own saints, it is a sad farce. They trifle and degrade God in his own temple. Look what one of the last of these scarce beings in your Church says,—

“Hence, seeing the greater part of priests say mass with so much hurry and carelessness in the performance of the ceremonies, one ought to weep even with tears of blood. Well might be applied to such the reproach of Clement of Alexandria to the Gentile priests, that they made heaven a theatrical scene, and God the subject of a comedy. But why should I say a comedy? Oh, what attention would not such pay if they had to recite a part in a comedy! And in saying mass, what attention do they pay? Words mutilated,—genuflections half made,—acts of mockery rather than of reverence,—crosses formed so that it would be impossible to know what they meant,—such movements about the altar and turnings, as even to excite ridicule and laughter,—handling the consecrated host and the consecrated chalice as though they were a piece of bread and a glass of wine,—confounding the words and ceremonies together, placing the one before or after the other, contrary to the order prescribed by the rubrics; the whole mass, in a word, from beginning to end, nothing but a tissue of carelessness, confusion, and irreverence.”²

Take another,—

“But, O God! seeing the irreverent manner in which so many priests now celebrate mass, who could say whether they were the representatives of Christ, or mountebanks earning their living by tricks of sleight of hand? . . . And what is still more to be wondered at, or rather to be lamented, is to see even religious, and some even of reformed orders, say mass with so much haste, and with such mutilated ceremonies, as scandalize even idolaters, and scandalize them more than if such religious orders had been the most lax secular priests.”³

“*And what think you would Father Avila say,*” remarks St. Liguori, “*of priests, who perhaps for thirty or forty years have offered up the Holy*

(1) “When the consecrated wafer is given to a dying person, it is called the Viaticum, because it prepares for us a passage to eternal happiness and everlasting glory. None of the faithful are suffered to depart this life without being previously fortified with this living bread from heaven.”

(2) *Sacerdos Sanctificatus*, pp. 21—22.

(3) *Ibid*, pp. 23—24. The whole work will repay perusal, as an illustration of some aspects of the Papacy.

*Sacrifice in the scandalous manner which we have seen above?"*¹ "Christ, then, belongs entirely to priests; but how many priests belong entirely to Christ? Oh, God, how do the greater part love their Saviour, who has loved and exalted them? Oh, God, how many poor labourers and shepherds love Christ better than many priests love him?"²

No pen but that of a Romanist can accurately depict Romanism. No Protestant has painted the hypocrisy of an Infidel Priesthood as have some of your saints. It has been their cry in all ages. From Bernard, the last of the Fathers, to the latest saint in modern times, the priesthood has been denounced in language unmeasured; but by none in stronger terms than by Liguori. Nor is this evil confined to the priests. The people participate in the feeling. I select the following as revealing a state of things not more fearful than true:—

"What irreverences are committed in his very presence! What insults are offered to his sacred majesty! During the greatest solemnities, during the exposition of the blessed sacrament, at the awful sacrifice of the mass, are not continual outrages committed against him? Is he not insulted in his churches, and even upon his altars? And do not sometimes even polluted hands dare to touch his sacred body?"³

Nor is this all. I have selected these statements for a specific purpose. The validity of everything in your system depends upon the intention of the officiating priest. For what you know, every time you bow before the consecrated wafer, you are guilty of the most fearful idolatry. You have no certainty. You can have none. The reality of the Sacrament depends upon so many things, over which you have and can have no control, that you never know what you worship. The doctrine of intention, as taught by the Tridentine Fathers, is full of danger, and should excite the profoundest alarm in every thoughtful mind; and I have selected these opinions of a favourite saint to show how the reckless and appalling depravity of the priesthood tends to augment the peril which surrounds your highest interests. Your own priest cannot tell that he has any lawful claim to the priesthood,

(1) *Sacerdos Sanctificatus*, pp. 22, 24, 28.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 78. We could fill page after page with extracts of this kind, but we forbear. The reader may consult pp. 133, 143—4.

(3) *Anima Devota*, p. 152; also, p. 213, &c.

simply from the fact, that it is morally impossible for him to tell that the intention of baptizing, consecrating, &c., in the long line of succession through which he traces his priestly descent, has not been wanting. A thousand circumstances render this more than probable.¹ But upon the Mass the Council thus decrees:—"Whoever shall affirm, that when ministers perform and confer a sacrament, it is not necessary that they should have at least the intention of doing what the church does, let him be accursed."² The Missal is still richer in examples. Look at the part called, Defects occurring in the celebration of the Mass. Some may arise from the bread:—

"If the bread be not wheaten, or if wheaten, mixed with grain of another kind, in such quantities as not to remain wheaten bread, or if it be otherwise corrupted, the Sacrament is not completed."

Others from the wine:—

"If the wine become wholly acid, or wholly putrid, or of sour or unripe grapes, or be mixed with so much of water that the wine is corrupted, the Sacrament is not completed."

"If the wine shall begin to be acid or corrupt, or shall become somewhat bitter or must, expressed from grapes, or the water shall not be mixed with it, or rose water shall be mixed with it, or other distilled water, the Sacrament is completed, but the officiating priest grievously sins."

Defects of intention, as for example:—

"If any one has before him eleven wafers, and intends to consecrate only ten, not determining which ten he intends, in those cases he does not consecrate, because the intention is requisite."

*"If any poisonous matter touch the Consecrated Host, then let the priest consecrate another, and receive it in the proper manner; and let the poisoned one be preserved in a box in a separate place, until the species be corrupted, and let the corrupted species be thrown out into a sacred place."*³

(1) Let the reader ponder the following fact in connexion with the apostolic succession and the doctrine of intention:—St. Bridget, a famous saint, says, "That the bishops took the counsel of the devil, who said to them, 'Behold these honours which I offer you, the riches that are in my hand. I dispense pleasure; the delights of the world are sweet; you must enjoy them.' The covetousness of the bishops is a bottomless gulf, and that their pride and luxurious lives was an unsavoury stream, which made them abominable before the angels of heaven, and before the friends of God upon earth." The reader will find much more in Claude's Reformation, part ii., c. i.

(2) Coun. of Trent, sess. 7, can. xi.

(3) "If any of the blood of Christ fall on the ground or table by negligence, it must be licked up with the tongue, the place must be thoroughly scraped, and the scrapings burnt; but the ashes must be buried in holy ground."—Missal, apud Taylor, pp. 266—7.

Let me from another source take an illustration or two. St. Liguori says,—

“The learned in general say, that if any one omits a notable part of the ceremonies of the mass, although not of the most important, he cannot be excused from grievous sin. Such omissions, when repeated in the same mass, amount to something grievous; and, therefore, are grievously irreverent to the Holy Sacrifice.”¹

“Suarez very properly says, that the omission of any ceremony prescribed in the rubrics, such as a sign of the cross, genuflection, inclination, &c., cannot be excused of venial sin. F. Concina, speaking of those who, in saying mass, do not touch the ground with one knee, when they genuflect, or who, when they should kiss the altar, only make an appearance of kissing it, or who do not properly form the crosses at the benediction, as prescribed in the rubrics; because, as Garant, &c., says, it is the same thing as to omit the ceremonies prescribed, to perform them improperly.”²

Other causes of failure are connected with the religious state of the soul, some being dependent upon the bodily health of the priest; in short, defects, many and various, may arise, but when they do, there is no consecration.³ Beyond all doubt, then, the priest may, or he may not, constitute a Sacrament. For what you know to the contrary, upon your own principles, every time you bow before the Host, you worship a piece of bread; and, instead of adoring the living and true God, you are guilty of the most gross and revolting idolatry. Need I remind you that all this is in perfect contrast to the practices of the early church,—more so to the apostolic. Just look at one,—your dogmas about bread and wine,—and see how full of absurdity and mischief they are. I quote from your own writers; but all history sustains them.

“The Offertory consisted of an offering of bread and wine, and at times of other gifts also, which were carried by the faithful and presented at the altar; of these the sacred minister took so much as was required for the Sacrifice, and for distributing the holy Eucharist to all those who desired to communicate,—the remainder was set apart for the poor. The portion set apart for the Sacrifice was then offered up, and presented to God by the celebrating priest, &c.”⁴

(1) *Sacerdos Sanctificatus*, &c., Liguori, p. 21.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 20.

(3) Missal, s. 6. Seymour's *Mornings with the Jesuits*, pp. 318—21. Claude's *Reformation*, p. 35. Minton's *Doctrine of Intention*, &c. *Sacerdos Sanctificatus*, pp. 13—20.

(4) *Way to Heaven*, p. 126. Also, Cyprian. *Library of the Fathers*, p. 241.

"They used for the Eucharist," says Fleury, "no other bread but what was offered by the people, and blessed by the Bishop."¹

The same was the case with the wine.² Now, compare your Canon with this; think of the consequences involved in it; and you will be compelled to admit that Popery is not only something perfectly distinct from the primitive age of the church, but so far as that deviation goes, and in nothing is it more than in this, a delusion and a snare.

There is another ground upon which, I think, the indifference of both priests and people may be explained, and which certainly should absolutely prevent any man who thinks from believing these dogmas. I mean the apparent absurdity which lies upon the surface. The following will explain my meaning:—

"The infallible voice of truth instructs us, that by the Omnipotent power which Christ has communicated to his sacred ministers, that bread and that wine are transubstantiated, that is, changed into the real body and the real blood of the Christ. Your eyes still behold the colour and the form of the bread and wine; the palate is conscious of no change in either; but faith assures that there remains neither the one nor the other in what you see and feel, and commands you to adore therein the hidden presence of your Redeemer, true God, and true man."³

"In this Sacred Mystery all is obscure, beyond the reach of our understanding, and imperceptible to our senses; we see nothing, feel nothing, taste nothing, but common bread; we hear nothing extraordinary; so that it is the voice and light of faith alone, which, as the Church says, supplies the defects of the senses, and finally persuades us that the adorable Eucharist is not bread, though it appears so to us, but the living, glorious, immortal body of Christ."⁴

This teaching is not the exception, but the rule. You are taught, everywhere, and at all times, to discard the senses. What you see, has the appearance of bread: if you smell, or taste, the result is ever the same; and yet, in opposition to all this, you are told that it is flesh and blood,—nay, the very God who created, and still upholds,

(1) Pope Alexander "*appointed that only bread and wine should be offered up in the mystery, but ordered that the wine should be mixed,*" &c.—Roman Breviary, p. 95. The thirty-sixth letter of Cyprian is thoroughly Anti-Papal on this dogma.

(2) Manners of the Christians, Part ii., c. 13—14; Part iii., c. 33—34. Upon this subject the reader may consult Bingham.

(3) *Anima Devota*, p. 224.

(4) Ursuline Manual, pp. 214—15.

all things.¹ You place it upon your tongue,—you may grind it with your teeth,—and you bite nothing but bread; still it is the body and blood, the soul and divinity, of the Redeemer of man. I stand appalled at the supposition, and I wonder your intelligent nature does not rise up in rebellion against such an absurdity. I write deliberately when I say, that it appears to me one of the grossest and most shocking delusions with which the world was ever deceived. You say it is a miracle: then it is unique, it stands alone; unlike all other interpositions of the Divine hand, not only in the magnitude of its nature, but in the manner of its appeal. It has nothing in common with anything recorded in the Divine word, and the most microscopic eye can trace no family likeness in it. The miracle of Cana, to which one of your writers has had the hardihood to appeal, has nothing with it in common. He says the water was transubstantiated into wine. Granted: but what then? If they looked at it, if they smelt it, if they tasted it, they were satisfied it was not water, but wine. But your wafer, after being converted into God, has this singular property, that it has the evidence still of being only bread. In the former, we see an intelligent agent dealing with intelligent creatures, and appealing, therefore, to the only tests by which his claims could be tried; but in your case we have only the solemn process of some cunning workman, asking us to relinquish quietly into his hands the only means by which his impositions could be detected. All God's works carry their own evidence. All his miracles, of which we have any record, stand out before us with accumulating proof. They must be self-evident, carrying upon their surface the trace of their origin and paternity. But transubstantiation, if it has any, is occult, deep, impenetrable, beyond all mortal ken, which no eye has pierced, and which no mind can ever investigate.

(1) "A god that neither sees, nor hears, nor speaks, nor breaths, nor moves; a god that cannot save himself from thieves and enemies; no, nor from dogs, rats, mice, or worms: in a word, a god that is made a thousand times over, in a thousand places, every day, and as often fairly devoured and eaten up by his maker."—Pendlebury on the Mass.

I offer no remark upon the unmixed and unparalleled blasphemy of professing to create God, and then, worse still, to eat him. Delusion can go no higher; and in these claims, the climax of priestly arrogance and presumption seems reached. Take another aspect. You profess to create the body and soul of Christ, and to present it whole in every particle to the communicants. Now, his Humanity, however perfect, is finite, because created. Its union with the Divine on earth, did not destroy its essential attributes, or absorb it in the higher nature. Nor is it less so in heaven. However exalted, perfect, glorious, his Humanity is not lost, but distinct, yet in highest, but most mysterious, union with the Divine. It cannot change. Human nature is necessarily limited. It cannot, in the nature of things, pervade all space: it cannot be in two places at the same time: it cannot lie upon the priest's hand here, and repose at the same moment upon the tongue of John of Beverley. Physically, this is impossible. Mark, I beseech you, whilst this difficulty is admitted in the teaching of the authorised priesthood, how it is solved: they say, it is a miracle,—that it is performed by the omnipotent power of God,—that with him all things are possible. Very good. But this is not universally true: for example,—God cannot perform a contradiction, an absurdity; he cannot lie, he cannot sin. Omnipotence can perform what is right, what is true, what is holy,—but nothing more. No man need hesitate to affirm the impossibility, by any effort of Omnipotence, to make the same identical body fill two places at the same time, much less ten thousand. We speak with reverence of the Divine Majesty, when we say, that whilst he can, by the mere expression of his will, create worlds, no effort of his omnipotence can make the same finite being fill distinct and separate places at the same time. No plea of miracle,—no appeal to the omnipotency of the Divine being, can rescue you from this conclusion, that you plead for an absurdity, an impossibility, and that, therefore, in rendering worship to the consecrated host, you are paying homage only to a piece of bread.

I have been somewhat amused, moreover, at the frequent attempts of your writers to sustain their views by appeals to the writings of the Fathers. Again and again, sentences are introduced without a reference, and, in many cases, without more than an apparent and verbal connection. For example, many of these good men speak, some of them rhetorically, of the immense benefits resulting from a participation by faith in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and at once this is applied to the doctrine of the mass. There is an unfairness, a meanness, in this, disgraceful in any case, but unutterably more so, when made in defence of the cause of holiness and truth.

So far from this dogma prevailing in the early church, all the evidences with which I am acquainted, and all which I am sure can be adduced, will rather prove that it was unknown in those ages. You cannot find it in the early creeds,¹ and it is absent from the decisions of the early councils. In all cases, both elements were used, and children, as well as adults, were permitted to partake of the Eucharist.² The true doctrine of transubstantiation, as held by you, appears first to have been propounded about 830—2, by Radbech,³ and the adoration of the Host can scarcely be dated earlier than the thirteenth century,⁴ whilst the doctrine itself was not enforced by any council earlier than 1215.⁵ We can see no likeness to what you are taught in the following:—*Those whom we call deacons or ministers, give to every one of them that are present a portion of the bread and wine: and that food we call the Eucharist, for we do not receive it as ordinary bread and wine. . . . But this food digested, our flesh and blood are fed, and we are taught, that it is the body and blood of Christ.*⁶ Now, can you digest God, or incorporate with

(1) Calvin's Tracts, iii., p. 62.

(2) Cyprian. Library of the Fathers, pp. 168—9. Pierce on giving the Eucharist to children. This writer pleads for it on the same grounds as for the baptism of infants.

(3) Hagenbach's History of Doctrine, ii., p. 89.

(4) *Ibid.*, ii., p. 103. The reader may consult this writer and Neander, with advantage, upon the developments of this doctrine.

(5) Bishop Cosins's History of Transubstantiation, p. 48.

(6) Justin's Apology, ii., p. 98.

your flesh the Divinity of the Son of God? Is it here? "*But Christ having taken the bread, and given it to his disciples, made it his body by saying, This is my body. Now, it could not have been a figure, except the body were real, for a mere appearance, an imaginary phantasm, is not capable of figure.*"¹ So wrote Tertullian against Marcion. "*Therefore, with fullest assurance, let us partake as of the body and blood of Christ; for in the figure of bread is given to them his body; and in the figure of wine, his blood; that thou, by partaking of the body and blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same body and blood with him.*" In this way, Cyril, in various instances, taught his catechumens.² In a book of vast importance to you at one time, and to which Rome owes much, there is this allusion to the subject:—"We also, our Father, thank thee for the precious blood of Christ, which was shed for us, and for his precious body, whereof we celebrate this representation, as himself appointed us, 'to show forth his death.'" Again, we have these directions:—"Let the bishops give the oblation, saying, *The body of Christ; and let him that receiveth, say, Amen. And let the deacon take the cup, and when he gives it, let him say, The blood of Christ, the cup of life; and let him that drinketh, say, Amen.*"³ This is all contained in the Constitutions, attributed to the apostles by bishops and deacons of your communion. Want of space forbids enlargement; still I cannot forbear quoting the opinions of a Saxon monk upon this topic:—"That housel is Christ's body, not bodily, but ghostly, of which he spake, when he blessed bread and wine, to housel, a night before his sufferings, and said, by the blessed bread, *This is my body; and again, by the holy wine, This is my blood, which is shed for many, in forgiveness of sins. Understand, now, that the Lord, who could turn that bread, before his suffering, to his body, and that wine to his blood, ghostly; that the selfsame Lord blesseth daily, through the priest's hands, bread and wine to*

(1) Bishop Cosins's History, p. 60.

(2) Cyril. Library of the Fathers, pp. 271, 278.

(3) Apos. Const., Lib. vii., s. xxv., Lib. viii. s. xlii.

his ghostly body, and to his ghostly blood."¹ I repeat, I could multiply these till this letter swelled to a large volume, but I must content myself by referring you to the works mentioned in the note.²

I ask your attention now, to the last ground upon which my opposition to this awfully revolting doctrine of your Church is placed: I mean Holy Scripture. You cannot, no man can, take the simple words of Jesus, uttered as he sat at meat with his disciples, and compare them with the gorgeous drama which takes place in your solemn pontifical mass, and find any identity. You may possibly find this splendid ceremony somewhere, and arguments may possibly be brought to show its fitness, from sources within the reach of the priesthood; but never from the simple, the tender, the beautiful, and impressive scenes of the Last Supper of the Evangelists. Men of first rate intelligence in your own body have had honesty enough to avow this. They have rested its defence upon other grounds, and frankly admitted that the language of Christ, in instituting the Supper, will bear a construction the very opposite of transubstantiation. Scotus, for example, confesses, "*That there is not any place in Scripture so express, as to compel a man to admit of transubstantiation, were it not that the Church hath declared it.*" Now, we do not believe that the Church can make that scriptural which is not there. Durandus says, "The word is found, but that by it the manner they contend for cannot be proved." G. Biel affirms, "That it is nowhere found in canonical Scripture." Fisher, eulogised, if not as a saint, yet, as a martyr, declares, "That there is no expression in Scripture, whereby the conversion of substance in the mass can be made good." Cardinal Cajetan tells us, "*There is not anything of force enough in the Gospel to make us understand in a proper sense these words, This is my body; nay, that presence which the Church (of Rome)*

(1) Soame's Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 425. Other important illustrations will be found here.

(2) Tillotson's Works, v. 1. Cosins's History of Transubstantiation. Usher's Religion of the Ancient Irish, and Answer to a Jesuit. Stillingfleet's Rational Account, &c.

*believes in the Sacraments cannot be proved by the words of Christ, without the declaration of the (Roman) Church."*¹

The more than probable truth of these concessions will, doubtless, be augmented from a moment's consideration of those parts of Scripture on which you profess to rest this dogma. I am not surely claiming too much, when I say, that a doctrine which manifestly contradicts the evidence of all my senses, which repudiates the great primary laws of my nature, and discards every principle upon which I decide in every other case, should be clear as the pure sunbeam, and self-evident in the proof with which it is clothed. As Aquinas says,—

"In touch, taste, sight, although deceived we be,
The Word of God is quite enough for me;
What God declares is true, I must believe,
The Word of Truth itself cannot deceive."

It is admitted, then, that what you see, and touch, and smell, and taste, is bread, and nothing else,—that your senses, in this solitary instance, prove false and deceptive guides,—that by a miracle this bread is made flesh, and yet you do not know it,—that it becomes the real body, the blood, the soul, the divinity of Christ, nay, the very Godhead itself: I say, the consequences involved in such claims are, beyond every other dogma, so fearfully momentous, that the evidence which supports a miracle so unique and stupendous, should stand far from the region of doubt and uncertainty. There ought to be no expression upon which you rely, which by any known law of language, by any just canon of interpretation, by any rule of the analogy of faith, can be capable of any other meaning. If it is, your position is worthless, and your cause is lost, for if it is true in one case, it would be true in all. Now, I will venture to affirm, that no man who would sit down and simply judge of the import of these words, "*This is my body*," upon the same principle as he would judge any other kindred expression,—as for example, "*This is my Father*," showing him his picture,—would or could by possibility adopt any other conclusion, than that he

(1) Cosinus's Hist., pp. 53—4.

meant, It is the figure, the representation of my body. Let him, moreover, realise in its fulness the whole scene, —the prospect of his Saviour's death,—his wish that it should be a standing memorial of his sufferings, full not only of moral teaching, but of historic proof, and see him take the bread, and, before his disciples, break it and give to them, saying, Take, eat, this is my body broken for you, and we feel assured, that by no process of reasoning could he come to the conclusion that the really living, breathing, speaking body of the Saviour was truly in the bread. Common sense, every law under which his mind could be brought, every instance of the usages of language, would force him to the conclusion that he meant, This is the emblem of my body.

I select, then, the words uttered by our Divine Master, as recorded by the Evangelists: "*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.*"¹ Now, both of us believe these to be the words of Christ, and that they refer to the Eucharist. Notwithstanding the insinuation of the doubt by Aquinas, that the rejection of the doctrine of the mass is the rejection of the truth of God, every Protestant can say, and if a genuine one, with the utmost truth,—

"What God declares is true, I must believe,
The Word of Truth itself cannot deceive."

In this we have boundless confidence, but not so in the Church. To the guidance of the one, we can unreservedly submit, but that confidence cannot be reposed in the other. The question then here is not, Are these the words of Christ? but, What do they mean, and upon what principle are we to understand them? Only two rules can possibly be applied: they must be understood either figuratively or literally. The latter you choose, and affirm that the Saviour means, that whilst sitting with his disciples, looking at them and speaking to them, and holding in his hand the bread, he *literally* transubstan-

(1) Matthew xxvi. 26.

tiated that bread which he held into his own body, and broke it, and gave it to them, and they eat it, though he was sitting before them, and in like manner also with his blood. Look at this for a moment. It is the essence of the mass. If it be not true, then the idolatry involved in it is of the most awful kind. In every particle of the bread was a whole Christ, and when the apostles placed it in their mouth, it was the same; yet the body of Christ was in his seat, and unchanged before them. How, then, without involving the grossest and most palpable contradiction, can that which remains be that which is eaten? In the hand of Christ, as he distributed the bread, was a whole Christ, body, soul, divinity, and all; but it is a fact, unchangeable as the Divine nature, and which Omnipotence cannot alter, that if a whole finite body be held in the hands of another finite body, the body that holds cannot be the same with the body that is held. The same body cannot, by any effort, be visible and invisible at the same time to the same persons; yet, in the Eucharistic Supper, the real body of the Saviour was manifest to his disciples, but the body made of bread was invisible.¹ Impossibilities, contradictions, in almost every conceivable form, are involved in such principles; and to take shelter under the omnipotency of God, is to betray our ignorance of his nature, and the great laws of his moral government.

But view this principle of interpretation, for a moment, in another case. Amongst the sayings of Christ are many quite as striking as this; and there is nothing upon the surface of this passage which demands from me a literal interpretation, which does not exist in connection with the others. Look at one. "*Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.*"² Now, beyond all controversy, the eating of his flesh is as positive in the one case, as eating his body is in the other; but would any sane man say, that the

(1) The reader is referred to Dr. Carson's Transub. Subversive of the Foundation of Human Belief, in which this line of argument is pursued with unanswerable force.—Works, ii., p. 49. Also Dr. J. C. Carson's Twelve Letters to Dr. Cabill. The son has amplified the arguments of the father with admirable effect.

(2) Rhemish Test., John vi. 53.

immaculate body of the Saviour was to be literally devoured, in order to obtain eternal life? Your own good sense would rise in opposition to such a conclusion; yet does not the principle upon which you found the doctrine of transubstantiation in the phrase, "This is my body," involve all this grossness and pure materialism? The same law is as applicable to the one as the other, and both must stand or fall by the same process. Just so it is with other expressions of precisely the same positive character, which, if explained upon your principle, would exhibit the most revolting absurdities. Take a few examples. "*I am the true vine.*" Was Christ literally a vine? "*I am the door.*" "*I am the way.*" "*I am the living bread.*" Was it so, that in all these cases he was, or became, literally what he says? Why then, I ask, should you suppose that when he said, "This is my body," he used words which are to be interpreted on a different principle? Methinks every man, even a child, would at once see, that one thing was the figure, the representation, of the other. For the criticism which makes the bread become literally his body, his soul, and divinity, will make the same body, soul, and divinity, become a vine, or a door.

Besides, suppose the case thus,—that we grant for a moment, that the expressions are to be understood literally, still we should ask, What shadow of resemblance can we find in them to your spiritual drama, as depicted by your own friends? What does it say of his soul, his divinity, of the Godhead itself? His body and blood are not his soul! They are surely not his Divinity! That could not be offered! No power on earth, or in heaven, could create that, much less eat it! Yet, upon this passage you base the impious power of a priesthood to bring God from heaven, and daily, nay, hourly, immolate him upon your altars; and then, according to St. Liguori, insult him in ten thousand instances, in his own temple, with the most awful mockery.

So with the blood. You tell us, that in the blood a whole Christ is found, as much as in the body. That his

body, soul, and divinity, are as much in the cup as in the bread.¹ But what literal interpretation of the text can find any such absurdities? Blood may be in bodies, but, since the creation, did any mortal ever find bodies, souls, and even divinities, in blood? But neither of the Evangelists say a word about wine. It is not there. Literally, it is the cup which is transubstantiated; and this, too, not into Christ's blood, but, "*This cup is the New Testament of my blood.*" You are right heartily welcome to such literalisms as these. Their conclusion you cannot avert, and they must demolish the whole dogma as enforced by you.

Let me, moreover, remind you of the allusions to this subject, in the letters of Paul, and how utterly impossible it is to reconcile your theory with his statement. I refer to 1 Cor. x. 16: "The *bread* which we *break*, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "For as often as ye *eat this bread*, and drink this cup," (xi. 26.) "Who-soever shall *eat this bread*," (ver. 27.) "But let a man so examine himself, and so let him *eat of this bread*," (ver. 28.) Again and again, the apostle affirms that what was eaten was bread, that it was bread after it was what you call consecrated into the body, and blood, and the divinity of the Son of God. He handled it as bread, he broke it as bread, and the Corinthians eat it as bread, that they might show forth the Lord's death till he come. I should like to have touched upon other topics, to have added additional proof of the unsoundness of this principle, and the contradiction involved in it, but I cannot. Let me, however, remind you, in closing, that the symbolic representation of this institute of the Saviour,—that is, that it is a representation, a sign, as Augustine says, of the body and blood of Christ,—is most in harmony with his designs. "As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me." He leaves it with us as a memorial, and that we, by observing it in the spirit of faith and humility, "may show forth his death till he come." Only upon this principle, moreover, can we ever har-

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monize two other great and vital truths, which pervade and link into sympathy and completeness the whole economy of mercy and love; I mean the finished work of Christ, and his perpetual life. Upon the former, the apostles build all. It is by *one* sacrifice,—by *one* offering for sin,—by *one* shedding of his blood,—he hath brought in an everlasting righteousness, and reconciled the world to God. His ever-living intercession,—his infinite freedom from suffering, for he *dieth* no more, *death having no more dominion over him*,—his perpetual bodily absence from his church on earth, and his enthronement in heaven, till he shall come again the second time without a sin-offering unto salvation,—upon these topics an argument might be based, utterly destructive of all the claims of priestly power and idolatrous homage paid to the wafer in the mass.

The more I have read, the more I have reflected, upon the pretensions of the priest, of the sensuous nature of the services, of the high honour paid to the wafer, of the many probabilities that there may be no consecration, and of the fearful contrast all this presents to the simple and spiritual injunction of the Saviour, the more I feel, that all who participate in these things are exposing themselves to the charge of teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, and are guilty of idolatry. A dogma, unsupported by the teaching of the Saviour and his inspired servants, sustaining only the cupidity and arrogant pretensions of a hierarchy, and involving the highest, because the eternal, interests of millions of our fellow-men, has no claim upon the intelligence or the toleration of free men. It is, as Tillotson says, “The great burning article of Rome,” and has involved in fearful ruin the bodies and souls of thousands.

LETTER VIII.

THE MORAL TEACHING OF ROMANISTS.¹

From the dogmas which have passed in review, let us now turn to the teaching of your Church upon some of the great principles of morals. The field is wide, and as rich as it is ample; and would well repay a larger share of attention than can be given to it in the compass of a letter. Striking as your dogmatic instructions have been found to be, your moral will be found to be singularly at variance with the "law and the testimony," and violating and setting at nought the supreme authority of the Divine Word. Error in the one is sure to produce it in the other. The maxim is as true in morals as in nature, that "a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit." I cannot help saying, that if your views of morals were to become universal, if men were honestly and without check to carry out what your casuists and Jesuits have taught upon this subject, then the decency, the order, the wellbeing of society would be annihilated, and truth, confidence, and virtue would be as scarce in modern as they were in mediæval times, when religion was entirely in your own hands.² No one who understands such volumes as "*Devotion made Easy*," or, "*Paradise Opened by One Hundred Devotions easily Performed*," will wonder at the immorality and crime which everywhere prevail when your influence is unchecked. Writers of this class confound all distinctions between right and wrong, and banish truth and piety from society and the world. It is in harmony with them, we suppose, that popes and prelates, though the

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(1) I use the phrase in a wide sense. One or two topics upon which I may touch may not strictly belong to this; but I feel anxious to place them before the reader, and no better place occurs for them.

(2) The reader will find a brief but candid view of these in Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. i.

incarnation of vice and corruption, can still consecrate and wield the powers of all worlds,—can give the Holy Spirit to others,—can create their Maker again and again,—can open heaven, and penetrate the darkest place of purgatory, and rescue some miserable wretch from the burning, and yet not believe a word about either one or the other. Adulterers, murderers, infidels, heretics, have filled the Papal throne, and yet they have been the representatives of immaculate purity. By bribes, by covetousness, by blood, by every crime, they have raised themselves to that giddy height,—yet they have been the vicegerents of Him “*who came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*” I say, no wonder that, with such examples, sustained and vindicated by the precepts which your divines have inculcated, morality should perish, and piety should die. No indictment can be too severe. No charges, however strong, but could be more than sustained by abundant evidence. Upon some of these I propose to touch in this letter.

I.

The first upon which I would fix for a moment is Sin. Correct views upon this lie at the foundation of all moral action. It is the transgression of God’s law. It is that which separates our spirit from all that is holy and good in the universe. Everywhere man’s transgression, in Holy Scripture, is stamped with God’s eternal abhorrence. Inspired men nowhere tolerate it. To induce their converts to renounce it, to flee from it, to cultivate and perfect holiness in the fear of God, was the supreme object of their labour, and the absorbing end of their life. In former letters we have seen the contrasts to this which your doctrines of indulgence and penance unfold, and I will now place it more distinctly before you.

The Council of Trent recognises a distinction between mortal¹ and venial² sins. The Catechism of Douay tells

(1) “What is mortal sin? It is that which of itself brings spiritual death into the soul, inasmuch as, of itself, it deprives the soul of sanctifying grace and charity, in which the spiritual life consists.”

(2) “What is venial sin? That which does not of itself bring spiritual death into the soul; or which is only slightly repugnant to the order of right reason.”—Dens.

us their number and names. There are only seven of these deadly ones, viz., Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Wrath, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth. Besides these there are six intermediate ones, called sins against the Holy Ghost; these are Despair of Salvation, Presumption in God's Mercy, Impugning the known Truth, Envy at another's Spiritual Good, Obstinacy in Sin, and Final Impenitence.¹ Into the multiplied distinctions which your writers make, into the various ways into which venial may become mortal, I cannot enter now; but upon some matters I may touch, to show how the evil of the one may be lessened, and the guilt of the other annihilated. Intention with you is everything. The reality of every service connected with your system depends upon the intention. Into the circle of morals the priesthood have carried this principle. I may kill a man, but it ceases to be murder if I had not the intention. Theft, lying, adultery, and the most revolting vices, become the very opposite from the intention and the circumstances in which these acts are perpetrated. In fact, it would be difficult to fix upon any modification of crime which has not been palliated, if not justified, by the members of the society of Jesus. Causelessly I would not bring so grave an accusation against any one; but no one can understand the principles of the Jesuits without knowing that they warrant everything, whatever its moral character may be, which would advance the interest of the Church, and what they call the "glory of God." Let me sustain these statements.

"If a man has received a blow on the face, he must on no account have an intention to avenge himself; but he may lawfully have an intention to avert infamy, and may, with that view, repel the insult immediately, even at the point of the sword."

Another says,—

"If your enemy is disposed to injure you, you have no right to wish his death by a movement of hatred; though you may to save yourself from harm."

(1) Key to Heaven, pp. 36—7. An illustration of these may be seen in the Garden of the Soul.

Nay, a third affirms,—

"That we may pray to God to visit with speedy death those who are bent on persecuting us, if there is no other way of escaping from it."

One cannot help being reminded by this opinion of an earlier authority, which says, *"Ye have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for those which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."*¹ Equally opposed is it to the following also:—

*"It is perfectly right to kill a person who has given us a box on the ear, although he should run away, provided it is not done through hatred or revenge, and there is no danger of giving occasion thereby to murders of a gross kind, and hurtful to society. And the reason is, that it is as lawful to pursue the thief that has stolen our honour, as him that has run away with our property."*²

Now this intention extends to all crime. Under the counsel of your ghostly confessor, men have only to turn off their attention from the desire of vengeance, and simply direct their thoughts to a desire to defend their honour, their property, &c., and there is nothing wrong. It may have to the eyes of the world all the marks of the worst crimes, but to the conscience of the perpetrator it is perfectly right. Is it not a moral transubstantiation?

Murder is thus practised: it has been practised and vindicated too by members of your society. An example or two of the teaching of some of your Doctors will be enough upon this subject, especially in connection with the above, and as it will come under review in a subsequent part of this letter.

*"Any private man, whoever he may be, has a right equal to the best, to kill the king, declared a public enemy: let him only have the will to fling away hopes of impunity, despise the risk, and dare attempt to seize his country. I never will believe that he who makes essay to slay him, has done anything whatever which he has not a right to do,"*³ &c.

(1) Matt. v. 43—5.

(2) Pascal's Letters, by M'Crie, Letter vii. The reader will be amply repaid by a perusal of this admirable production.

(3) Mariana de Rege. Quoted by Connolly. Letter to Lord Shrewsbury, Note A.

Lessius says,—

"Should a priest, for instance, happen to have a fellow-being to kill whilst celebrating the holy Eucharist, he may quietly go on with his communion the moment he has effectually made away with him."¹

"An ecclesiastic or a monk may unaccountably kill a defamer, who threatens to publish the scandalous crimes of his community, or his own crimes, when there is no way of stopping him; if, for instance, he is prepared to circulate his defamation unless promptly despatched."

"A priest may not only kill a slanderer, but there are certain circumstances in which it may be his duty to do it."²

Few need be told, who are conversant with the character of modern Italy or Spain, how frequently these dogmas are reduced to practice. Life is comparatively valueless, and is sacrificed on the most trifling occasion. Whilst no difficulty is ever found in soothing the conscience, or obtaining absolution from the guilt. Nor is it less manifest, that *truth* is as valueless as life. Follow the instructions of these infallible guides, and *equivocation* and *lying* would triumph in the world. Let us listen for a moment to the saintly Liguori, the pet saint of his Eminence of Westminster, and whose moral system, after twenty times examination, is declared by the highest authority not to have a single word worthy of censure. After stating certain things in relation to equivocation and mental reservation, he says,—

"It is a certain and common opinion amongst all divines, that for a just cause it is lawful to use equivocation in the propounded modes, and to confirm it with an oath."³

Dens, in reply to the question, "What a confessor should do when asked about what he only knows from confession," says, "*He ought to answer that he does not know it, and if it be necessary, confirm the same with an oath.*"⁴ The reason is, singular,—he does not know this as man, but only as God, and therefore answers as man and not as God. The question is asked, "Is it lawful to deny the

(1) Mariana de Rege. Quoted by Connolly. Letter to Lord Shrewsbury, p. 43, note E.

(2) Pascal, Letter vi.

(3) "A just cause," he says, "is any honest end, in order to preserve good things for the spirit, or useful things for the body."—Confessional Unmasked, pp. 16—17.

(4) *Ibid*, p. 2.

faith?" Liguori replies, "*It is lawful to dissemble what is, or to cover the truth with words, or ambiguous and doubtful signs, for a just cause, and when there is not a necessity of confessing.*" "*Not only is it lawful, but often more conducive to the glory of God and the utility of your neighbour, to cover the fault than to confess it: for example, if concealed among heretics, you may accomplish a greater amount of good,*"¹ &c.

Tell me what would be the condition of our families, what the safety of our property, if such teaching as the following prevailed, and were to influence the domestics of this kingdom.

"*May servants who are dissatisfied with their wages, use means to raise them by laying their hands on as much of the property of their masters as they consider necessary to make the said wages equivalent to their trouble? They may in certain circumstances; as when they are so poor that, in looking for a situation, they have been obliged to accept the offer made to them, and when other servants of the same class are gaining more than they elsewhere.*"²

Not only does not Liguori differ from this, but he actually furnishes a regular "*scale of thefts*," to show how far the dishonest may go, without being guilty of mortal sin. Look at the following statement, and tell me if it be not "too bad."

"*The Salmanticensis say, that a servant can, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN JUDGMENT, compensate himself for his labour, if he without doubt judge that he was deserving of a larger stipend. Which, indeed, appears sufficiently probable to me, and to other more modern learned men, if the servant or any other hired person be prudent, and capable of forming a correct judgment, and be certain concerning the justice of the compensation, all danger of mistake being removed.*"

Take another,—

"*A poor man, absconding with goods for his support, CAN ANSWER THE JUDGE THAT HE HAS NOTHING.*"

Once more, and I have done with this horrid teaching:—

"*If any one on an occasion should steal only a moderate sum, either from one or more, not intending to acquire any notable sum, neither to injure his neighbour to a great extent by several thefts, he does not sin*

(1) Confessional Unmasked, pp. 14—15.

(2) Pascal, Letter vi., 89—90.

grievously, nor do these, taken together, constitute a mortal sin; however, after it may have amounted to a notable sum, by detaining it, he can commit mortal sin. But even this mortal sin may be avoided, if either of these he be unable to restore, or have the intention of making restitution immediately of those things which he thus received."¹

No one can be only partially familiar with these writings of your priests, no one can read these extracts from them, without being struck with the many and varied efforts they have made to diminish the evil of sin, and facilitate its commission, and to render it difficult for men to be lost. They may live in proximate cases of sin,² they may go into temptation, they may participate in its commission, they may deny the truth, swear, lie, steal, and murder, without much fear; only confess and pay, and then heaven is safe; the simplest remedy, a scapula, a chaplet on his arm, a rosary in his pocket, in honour of the Virgin, and all is right.³ This fearful error is the core of your whole system. From it springs your lifeless forms of official holiness, your works of supererogation, your image and saint worship, your doctrines of penance and purgatory. All exist to render unnecessary that purity of heart, that sanctity of our whole nature, "without which no man can see the Lord."

That such teaching will be destructive to all high moral feeling, both in the teacher and the taught, admits of no doubt; that those countries where Romanism prevails exhibit a rich harvest of vice in every form is equally certain. Go when you will, you will find Rome without a Sabbath, the marriage tie without sacredness,⁴

(1) The Confessional Unmasked, pp. 29—31. These are only selections from a mass which the reader will find there. The different amount from individuals is stated by Bailey, II., c. vii., p. 232.

(2) "That cannot be called a proximate occasion," says Escobar, "when one sins but rarely, or on a sudden transport, say, three or four times a year." "One may seek an occasion of sin, directly and expressly, *primo et per se*, to promote the temporal or spiritual good of himself or his neighbour."—Pascal, Let. x.

(3) "A female who, while she practised daily the devotion of saluting the image of the Virgin, spent all her days in mortal sin, and yet was saved after all, by the merit of that single devotion."—*Ibid*, Let. ix.

(4) When residing some weeks in Belgium, the writer, upon enquiry, found that in most cases marriage was only a matter of convenience, and domestic infidelity, as a consequence, the rule of social life.

and life and liberty held as things of no value. It spreads through all ranks. The life blood of the community is poisoned with it, and the daily life of the people is as contrary to the purity and spirituality of the New Testament, as the elements of Romish teaching are opposed to every accurate conception of the Saviour's character and will. Look at one fact, and with this I will close this topic for the present. It will speak for itself. *Murder.* In England, per annum, 4 to the million of population: now, mark the progress; in Belgium, 11; in France, 31; in Austria, 36; in Bavaria, 68; in Sicily, 90; in Naples, 174; and now, the centre, the heart, the glory, and perfection of Romanism, in Rome, the seat of his Holiness, where your system has no check, in the Papal States it is only 113. England, the land of heresy, has 4 to the million. Rome, the land of saints, and the residence of "*more than a God upon earth*," has 113. Look at another item. *Illegitimate births.* In London they are 4 per cent. per annum; in Paris, 33; in Brussels, 35; in Munich, 48; in Vienna, 51 per cent.; but in Rome, with all its priests, and monks, and nuns besides, in addition to all the saints in the calendar, in 1836, the births were 4,375, and out of these only 3,160 were foundlings. Such is a specimen of the morality of Rome.¹

II.

No visitor to Roman Catholic countries can fail to remember the pictorial representations of Deity which may be seen in almost every church. The loftiest conception of the eternal Majesty, embodied in these degrading representations, never soar above a Grecian Jupiter. Everywhere you gaze upon a venerable old man, with flowing locks and beard, and holding a globe in one hand and a sceptre in another; to his left is the naked body of

(1) Seymour's Ev. with the Jesuits. "Everything connected with Rome proclaims its materialism. It is exclusively sensuous. Genius, wealth, power, taste, have exhausted themselves in structure, &c.; but the people are enfeebled, oppressed, poor, and superstitious. The loving girdle which encircles St. Peter's, at Rome,—the gem of Romanism, the temple of the world,—has no parallel for mental, social, and physical debasement, in the universe."—See Lady Morgan's Italy, ii., pp. 374, 375.

the Saviour, with a flowing scarf around his loins, and grasping his cross; descending from above, and between the two, is the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. Sometimes the Father differs greatly: in some cases he is without a crown, at others he is adorned with a triple one, and generally "*the Daughter of the eternal Father*," "*the Spouse of the Holy Ghost*," is very prominent. Everything here exhibited to the popular gaze is materialism. Beyond it the thoughts of the mass never rise. Now, if from pictures we turn to books, shall we find the minds of the writers more elevated than those of the artists? The same ignorance marks the one as distinguishes the other. God in the pages of your devotional works is not lovable, not attractive. More or less he stands before us as an infinite tyrant, implacable, full of revenge, and always indisposed to the guilty. Nothing can elicit the confidence, or inspire child-like affections in the hearts of his children. In sullen majesty he sits; to the solitude of his own immensity he retires; requiring coaxing by saints, and all the blandishments of the Queen of Heaven, to induce him to spare the guilty. I confess some of these representations often remind me more of Homer's Olympian Jove, than "*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*," "*the Father of mercies*," and "*God of all grace*." As Bossuet has said, "It matters not to what we liken God, provided he frighten us."¹ Upon this repose your Mariolity, your image worship, and purgatory. Give but correct conceptions of the Divine Majesty,—only let the teaching of the Bible unfold the true character of God,—and these would fall before it, like Dagon before the symbol of his presence. That my conjecture is right, I think will be manifest in a moment. I can only give an example or two.

"*The blessed Virgin soon, therefore, induces Christ to pray for us to his Father, and thus she obtains what we are not sure of obtaining for ourselves: for we are utterly unworthy of approaching our Lord, and he has a right to reject us by his justice; since having entered, after his resurrection, into all the sentiments of his Father, he has the same disposition as his*

(1) Lady Morgan's Italy, ii., p. 473.

*Father to reject all sinners, hence the difficulty is to induce him to change his character of Judge into that of Advocate; now this it is that all the saints effect, and especially the blessed Virgin."*¹

Am I wrong? Give but the scripture character of God to the people, and such teachings would be powerless. Christ, in the language of Paul, "ever liveth to make intercession for us." "My little children," says John, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Mary, Paul, Francis?—no, "Christ the righteous." G. Biel is equally explicit upon this topic:—

*"Our heavenly Father gave the half of his kingdom to the blessed Virgin, Queen of Heaven, which is signified in the case of Esther, &c. So that our heavenly Father, who possessed justice and mercy, retained the former, and conceded to the Virgin mother the exercise of the latter."*²

Perhaps it is upon this principle that some of your leading teachers have inculcated the dogma, that the whole affection of the heart may be withheld from him. Singular as it may appear, yet such is the fact. Men, professing to be the servants of God, the only authorised teachers of true piety, have not only discussed the question, how little love to God is compatible with salvation, but have actually fixed upon the time when it may be exercised. Their opinions cannot be too widely spread, and you will need no apology for their introduction here. The question discussed is this, "*When is one obliged to have an actual affection for God?*" None but a Jesuit would discuss it, and any one else would have been reminded of the sentence of the great Teacher, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."³ Not so say your teachers. "*Suarez says it is enough if one loves him before being articulo mortis—at the point of death—without determining the exact time. Vasquez, that it is sufficient even at the very point of death. Others, when one has received baptism. Others again, when one is bound to exercise contrition. And others on festival days. Hurtado de Mendoza insists that we are obliged to love God once a year; and*

(1) Cate. of Interior Life, p. 87.

(2) See Elliot, p. 754.

(3) Matt. xxii. 37.

that we ought to regard it as a great favour that we are not bound to do it oftener. But our father Coninck thinks that we are bound to it only once in three or four years; Henriquez, once in five years; and Filutius says that it is probable that we are not strictly bound to it even once in five years. How often then do you ask? Why, he refers it to the judgment of the judicious." Pardon me if, in addition to this precious stuff, I select another from the mass before me. It is an attempt at explanation, and discovers to us the process by which great truths and solemn verities are reasoned away. How instructive! What really could stand before such a mental process!

*"God in commanding us to love him is satisfied with our obeying him in his other commandments. If God had said, Whatever obedience thou yieldest me, if thy heart is not given to me I will destroy thee! would such a motive, think you, be well fitted to promote the end which God meant, and only can have in view? Hence it is said, that we shall love God by doing his will, as if we loved him with affection, as if the motive in this case was really charity. If that is really our motive, so much the better; if not, still we are strictly fulfilling the commandment of love, by having its works, so that (such is the goodness of God) we are commanded not so much to love him as not to hate him."*¹

Can you call that the religion of the Bible? It may be Jesuitism; it may be Romanism; but no man, with the New Testament before him, can call that the religion of Christ. I do not wonder that Ranke should say somewhere, "that the Jesuits themselves, with a certain sort of honesty, sometimes express surprise on perceiving how light and easy their tenets render the yoke of Christ."

III.

Upon your Sacrament of Baptism I wish to touch for a moment, but only upon one of its aspects. Into the question about the mode and subjects I enter not. Upon both of them I think you have not the mind of the Spirit. Nor can I even glance at those dramatic scenes of which it is composed. In these matters your genius is unrivalled. Around it is thrown a magic charm, which

(1) Pascal, Let. x. The reader will be well repaid by consulting *The Exposure of Romanism*, by a Romanist.

must awe the ignorant and affect the superstitious. I was forcibly struck with one of these exhibitions in Belgium, though I strongly suspect that the surprise which I evinced at the time discovered to the officiating minister my heretical character. The water must be consecrated with the oil of mystic unction, the closing scene of which reminds one of a certain scene in *Macbeth*:—

“ Mingle, O thou holy chrism ;
Blessed oil, I mingle thee ;
Mingle, water of baptism ;
Mingle all ye sacred three :
Mingle, mingle, mingle ye,
In the name of +, and of +, and +.”¹

The exorcism,² the signing of the cross upon the forehead, the salt,³ the spittle,⁴ the oil of chrism, the white napkin, the burning light,—space forbids the illustration of these. Superstitious and trifling, they are harmless compared with that upon which I would fix your attention.⁵

The Council of Trent says, “ *Whoever shall affirm that baptism is indifferent, that is, not necessary to salvation, let him be accursed.*” The catechism of the same venerable body is more explicit still. “ *The law of baptism, as established by our Lord, extends to all, inasmuch that, unless they are regenerated by the grace of baptism, be their parents christians or infidels, they are born to eternal misery, and everlasting destruction.*” Again it says, “ *Infants,*

(1) “ Let the vessel be washed and cleansed, and then filled with clear water ; then let the sacrificing priest, in his surplice (or alb) and stole, with the clerks or other priests, if they be at hand, with the crosses, two wax candles, the censor and incense, the vessel of the chrism, and the oil of the catechumen, solemnly advance to the font,” &c.—Wylie, p. 304. “ A lighted torch is put into the font to represent the fire of divine love,” &c.—Hey’s *Sin. Christian*, i., p. 411. Upon what does the reader think this is based ? Why, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire !

(2) The priest breathes upon the candidate, and says, “ Depart from me, thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.”

(3) The priest puts a little salt into the mouth, saying, “ Receive the salt of wisdom,” &c.

(4) The priest touches the nostrils, ears, &c., with it, saying, “ Be thou opened into an odour of sweetness ; be thou put to flight, O devil, for the judgment of God will be at hand.”

(5) At baptism the child is named, taking that of some saint, who henceforth becomes its guardian. This will explain to our readers the reason why our Continental neighbours frequently have so many. Each saint acts in this affair.

unless baptized, cannot enter heaven." In Seabati's, dedicated to Bp. Ullathorn, the following occurs:—

"What, then, is the grace which is received by means of baptism?" "The grace which is received in baptism, is that by which man, first, is cleansed from original sin, and from every other sin committed before baptism: secondly, freed from every punishment of sin, eternal and temporal: thirdly, clothed with the habits of the virtues: fourthly, incorporated with Christ, made a son of God, and a coheir of eternal life: fifthly, consecrated for ever to the Divine service and worship, by participating of the priesthood of Christ."¹

"*Baptism.* Is baptism necessary for salvation? Yes; this sacrament is more necessary than any other; because no one, not even infants, can be saved without it."²

These will serve my purpose to bring out the facts I am anxious to place before you; but for a moment I beg you to remember, that all the validity of this depends upon a power over which you have no control, and the very existence of which you really can never know. I mean the intention of the priest in administering. Upon this everything rests. As for example,—

"What intention ought the baptizer to have? Whoever baptizes must have the intention of doing what the holy Church, that is, the faithful of Christ, does, or of performing the cleansing ordained by Christ."³

The same is affirmed by the Tridentine Fathers. Not one of your community, not a priest, a bishop upon his throne, nor his Holiness, has an assurance that he has been validly admitted into the visible church. You may boast of your certainty, but it is a shadow, a figment. And when we think of the corruption, corruption which has no parallel in the world's history, which has saturated the whole priesthood, the probability amounts to all but a moral certainty.

The fact, then, stands out before us, that your Church consigns to eternal and unmingled misery the myriads of human beings who die in infancy without baptism: consigns them, then, not for actual sin, not for any fault of their own; consigns millions of them, then, for the want of what Providence has not placed within their reach. Of

(1) Dr. A. R. Seabati's Catechism, translated by the Rev. W. S. Ager, p. 93.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 94.

(3) *Ibid*, p. 96.

baptism many nations have never heard; of its saving efficacy millions upon millions of parents, whose children die in infancy, know nothing; and yet you doom them, not to purgatory, but to perdition!¹ Said we not truly that your conceptions of the Divine Majesty were Olympian rather than Christian; that he was the stern, merciless, cruel tyrant, rather than the tender and gracious One, who is not willing that any should perish? It is upon this principle that the Church has made provision for idiots, for abortives, and even constructed instruments for administering this rite to children before they are born.² Upon this principle, too, the deceit and hypocrisy of your missionaries are justified, in carrying up their sleeves, or secreted about their persons, various instruments or vessels, by which, unseen by the parents, when fondling the child, they can squeeze a drop or two of water upon its unconscious head.³ Upon this principle, that a laic, an old woman, or even an heretic, may administer baptism.⁴ No doubt, from the absorbing conviction of the vital importance of this ceremony, the propagandists of Rome, from the sixth century downwards, have hesitated at no means to force nation after nation to submit to her authority in this rite. Be baptized, and all sin is pardoned, and heaven is secure; reject it, and you are lost for ever.⁵

I think I could easily show that this dogma, so revolting to common sense, is equally abhorrent to the teaching of the Bible. Upon it its silence is profound. Not a word, not an allusion, happily for the religion of Christ, is found

(1) "Felt by those multitudes, many and vast,
Of men, women, and infants.

That these of sin
Were blameless; and if ought they merited
It profits not, since baptism was not theirs."

—Dante's Hell, canto iv.

(2) The curious reader will find some singular illustrations in Robinson's History of Baptism.

(3) See Weiss's History of the French Protestants.

(4) See Lawrence on Lay Baptism. Bingham's S. History of Baptism. Upon the validity of Heretical Baptism the reader may consult Cyprian's Letters.

(5) Upon the condition of unbaptized infants the Church of England and various Protestant sects profess to give no decision; but we honestly confess that their teaching logically leads to that of the Romanist.

there. The gospel is addressed to intelligent, and therefore responsible, beings. It demands from them an intelligent assent to its claims, and the homage it requires is that of the judgment and the heart. With infants it never deals. They come not within the range of its influence, and their moral state in the future is untouched by it. Most certainly nothing within the whole compass of its teaching warrants the horrid doctrines of your church; on the contrary, its great principles and general tendency fully warrant the conclusion, that all children dying in infancy, whether they be Jew or Gentile, Turks or idolators, are freed from the consequence of original sin by the atonement of Christ, and thus pass from the present to the world of purity and bliss. Upon this topic no intelligent mind can mark the design of the religion of Christ without feeling that it stands at the widest possible extreme to the revolting and God-dishonouring dogmas held by you.¹

IV.

Society generally has regarded swearing as the most solemn form in which men can bind themselves to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is beyond all doubt the most solemn obligation which men can contract. He who swears, calls God to witness the truth of his assertions; and, also, either expressly or by implication, invokes upon himself the judgment of God if he speaks falsely.² Wherever the validity of an

(1) It may interest some readers to see the opinions of one or two saints upon this subject. St. Zeno, Bishop of Verona, about 380, in his sermons, says, "That it was the custom at that time to plunge the whole body into the water in baptism, and that the water was warmed; for which purpose the editors of his works observe, that the Popes Innocent I. and Sixtus III. had adorned the great baptistry at Rome with two silver stags, with cocks," &c.—Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, iv., p. 133. "St. Galasinus, a comedian at Heliopolis, in Phœnicia, having been baptized in jest, in a warm bath, on the stage, coming out of it, loudly professed himself a christian, and was stoned to death by the mob in 297."—*Ibid*, viii., p. 402. Baptistries were at first spacious outer-buildings within the churchyard, as appears by Constantine's churches, also from Paulinus, St. Cyril, Sidenius, St. Ambrose, &c. This continued till the sixth century. Tertullian says, "The adult person who was to be baptized made his renunciations before the altar, and then was led forth to the water," &c.—*Ibid*, xi. p. 177. See Simpson's *Baptismal Fonts* for some curious information upon this subject.

(2) Wayland's *Moral Sciences*, p. 277.

oath is admitted, the violation of it indicates the lowest state of moral feeling; for as its appeal is to the God of truth, so the disregarding of it is a crime of no ordinary magnitude, and should subject the transgressor to punishment, as unworthy of the trust and confidence of all men. Upon this subject, so intimately connected with the safety, the morals, the property, and life of men, no pagan moralist has inculcated morality so low as your celebrated teachers. No confidence can be placed in the most solemn and impressive guarantee of the truthfulness of any statement by a Roman Catholic who fully imbibes and carries out the instruction of the saints. Formerly "an oath of confirmation was an end of all strife;" but now it is not so. Formerly false swearing was treated as a crime of the worst character by inspired men; now their pretended successors can advocate it as a thing redounding to the Divine glory. But let us hear your teachers. Bailly says,—

*"A promissory oath obliges, under the penalty of mortal sin, to do that which is promised in the oath, unless a legitimate cause exists."*¹

St. Liguori says,—

"To swear with equivocation when there is a just cause, and equivocation itself, is lawful, *is not evil*; because when there is a just cause for concealing the truth, and it is concealed without a lie, no detriment is done to an oath; but if it is *done without a just cause*, it will not indeed be perjury, since, according to our sense of the word or mental restriction, he swears true; however it will be *of its own nature* a mortal sin against religion, since it will be a great irreverence to take an oath to deceive another in a grave matter."

*"He who hath sworn to a judge that he would speak what he knew, is not bound to reveal concealed things. The reason is manifest."*²

Suppose I ask the following question:—*Whether the accused, legitimately interrogated, can deny a crime, even with an oath, if the confession of the crime would be attended with great disadvantage?* What is the answer, after quoting the opinions of various others? Yes,—

"The accused, if in danger of death, or the prison, or perpetual exile,

(1) Moral Theology, li., p. 117. Apud Lord's Maynooth, p. 73. Liguori says, "A just cause is any honest end in order to preserve good things for the spirit, or useful things for the body." "If the things sworn become impossible or unlawful on account of the prohibition of any superior."

(2) See Confessional Unmasked, pp. 15, 16, 20.

*the loss of all property, the danger of the galleys, and such like, can deny the crime even with an oath (at least without great sin), but understanding that he did not commit it so that he is bound to confess it, only let there be a hope of avoiding the punishment."*¹

Very comforting this! Nor is the following less so:—

"It is asked, Whether an adulteress can deny adultery to her husband, understanding that she may reveal it to him? She is able to assert equivocally, that she did not break the bond of matrimony, which truly remains; and if sacramentally she confessed adultery, she can answer, *I am innocent of this crime, because by confession it was taken away.* Ita. Card., diss. 19, n. 54, who, however, here remarks, that she cannot affirm it with an oath, because in asserting anything, the probability of a deed suffices, but in swearing certainty is required. *To this it is replied that, in swearing, moral certainty suffices, as we said above.*"²

Dens, discussing this question, says:—

"What ought a confessor to answer, being interrogated as to a truth which he knew only by sacramental confession? A. He ought to answer that he does not know it, and, if necessary, to confirm the same by an oath. Obj. It is not lawful in any case to lie; but he the confessor would lie, for he knows the truth, therefore it is not lawful for him. A. I deny the minor (that is, that he knows the truth), because such confessor is interrogated as a man, and answers as a man; but he does not know that truth as a man, although he knows as God, saith St. Thomas; and that sense is naturally included in the answer."³

I only give these as samples. They could be multiplied almost to any extent. To you it will be manifest that an oath affords no security. It can be broken at any time. The superior can absolve the inferior from it. The general of any order of monks can free them, even without a cause, from any oath they may take.⁴ Self-interest, the good of the community, the good of the Church, the

(1) See Confessional Unmasked, p. 19.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 21.

(3) The Church of Rome, &c.: a Report on Documents in the Library at Cambridge and the Bodleian at Oxford, p. 23. Liguori says that this should be so, "even where the safety of a whole nation would be at stake."

(4) "It seems good to us in the Lord, that, excepting the express vows by which the Society is bound to the Pope for the time being, and the three other essential vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, no constitution, declaration, &c., and any order of living, can involve an obligation to sin, mortal or venial, unless the Superior command them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, or in virtue of holy obedience, which shall be done in those cases or persons wherein it shall be judged that it will greatly conduce to the particular good of each, or to the general advantage; and instead of the fear of offence, let the love and desire of all perfection succeed, that the greater glory and praise of Christ, our Creator and Lord, may follow."—Constitution of the Jesuits, pt. vi., ch. v. London, 1838.

glory of God, and any other sort of case, which may generally be reduced to piety, spiritual utility, or necessity, are the grounds upon which these solemn appeals to heaven can be violated. Should these fail, then there is a dispensing power in the Church. His Holiness, it is admitted on all hands, can abrogate all obligations.¹ This is the statement made by one of the most eminent of your saints: "HOWEVER, LET THEM BE EVER SO VALID, THEY CAN BE RELAXED BY THE CHURCH; *but in the name of the Church are included not only the Pope, but also Bishops, Chapters,*" &c.²

All history shows that these doctrines are something more than the dogmas of priests. In the hands of the pontiffs and their dependants they have been made to tell upon the highest interests of society. Upon some of them we may touch in the section upon which we must now enter.

V.

Romanists declare that out of their communion there is no salvation. No matter whether they are infidels, steeped in the worst crimes which have marked humanity, equal to many a pope, or marked by all the virtues or moral excellencies which can dignify and adorn our nature, misery will be their portion for ever.³ Salvation is only found within your circle. But it is not enough that they are consigned to the misery of the future world,—you will deal with them in this. Upon one class I wish to fix here. I and my countrymen have an interest in it. We are dissidents from your communion. We glory in it. We hate, with unutterable and unextinguishable hatred,

(1) The Confessional, &c., p. 24. "The Church," says Bellarmine, "is bound to believe that to be morally good which the sovereign Pontiff commands, and that morally bad which he forbids."—Connally's Letter to Lord Shrewsbury, p. 6.

(2) "Suppose," says Laynot, "the Pope were to engage, under a solemn oath taken by himself, not to make use of his dispensing power, the oath would cease to be obligatory the very instant that charity counselled him to break it."—Connally, p. 8.

(3) "Whosoever," says Aquinas, "shall be separated from this Catholic Church, however laudably he may think himself to live, for this sole crime, that he is severed from Christianity, he shall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

the doctrines and policy of Rome, and we unhesitatingly avow it. Now, it cannot be a matter uninteresting to us to know how you feel about us, and especially how some of your superiors would treat us if they had power equal to their will. Let us see your opinion upon heretics. The Church claims authority over all who have been baptized.¹

"Heretics, schismatics, apostates, and all such like, being baptized, are bound by the laws of the Church which concern them, because they have been by baptism made subjects of the Church; nor are they more released from her laws than subjects rebelling against a lawful prince are released from the laws of that prince."²

"Heretics are bound by the laws of the Church, because they are by baptism made subjects of the Church; nor are they more exempted from her laws than subjects who rebel against a prince."³

From this singular doctrine let us turn for a moment to another. Can the Church deal with us as rebels, and how? Upon this question there is clearness and decision.

"Can unbelievers be compelled to return to the faith? It is certain that baptized infidels, whether heretics or apostates, can be compelled to return to the faith, and keep the ecclesiastical law, whether baptized in their infancy, or baptized from compulsion and fear in their adult ages."⁴

To such an extent is this carried, that we have no claim upon you at all, and our unhappy condition frees you from all moral obligation towards us. You may deal with us just as you like. Our property, our reputation, our lives, are just at your mercy. Listen to the utterance of a master:—

"He who owes anything to a heretic, by means of purchase, promise, exchange, pledge, deposit, loan, or any other contract, is *IPSO FACTO* free from the obligation, and is not bound to keep his promise, bargain, or contract, or his plighted faith, even though sworn, to a heretic."⁵

Another answers this question,—

"Are vassals, and servants, and others, freed from any private obligation due to a heretic, and from keeping faith with him? Yes; all are so

(1) "Any traveller, even a layman, or a woman, or a heretic, or even an unbaptized infidel, can validly baptize, nay lawfully, in cases of necessity."—Baillý. The reader may consult the Letters of Cyprian for an opinion the very opposite of this.

(2) Roman Ch., p. 12.

(3) *Ibid*, p. 13.

(4) Lord's Maynooth, p. 89.

(5) *Ibid*, p. 82.

by the clear disposal of the law. They may know that they are freed from the debt of fidelity and of all obedience to a man, whosoever remain bound by any sort of covenant, though fortified by any kind of affirmation whatsoever, to those who are manifestly lapsed into heresy."¹

"And all heretics, of both sexes, and of every name, we damn to perpetual infamy; we declare hostility against them; we account them accursed, and their goods confiscated; nor can they enjoy their property, or their children succeed to their inheritance; inasmuch as they grievously offend against the Eternal, as well as the temporal king."²

Our readers will be amused to see to what an extent this hatred is carried. We give an example:—

"If the bones of those excommunicated be buried in consecrated ground, and can be discriminated from the others, they ought to be dug up and cast out in some place near."

"That cemeteries in which it happens that the bodies of the excommunicated have been interred, shall be reconciled by the sprinkling of water solemnly blessed."³

That no faith is to be kept with heretics, that they are to be extirpated when it can be done easily, admits of no doubt; but it is really amusing to listen to the defences which these saints offer for this murderous conduct. Mark the saintly St. Thomas:—

"It is much more grievous," says Thomas Aquinas, "to corrupt faith, which is the source and life of the soul, than to corrupt money, which but tends to the relief of the body. Hence, if coiners and other malefactors are justly put to death by the secular authority, much more may heretics, not only be excommunicated, but put to death."⁴

"Now, all these reasons convince us that heretics are to be put to death; for, first, they injure those who come in contact with them more than any pirate or robber, since they kill souls, nay, take away the foundation of every good thing, and fill the commonwealth with tumults, which necessarily follow diversity of religion."⁵

"Finally, it is an act of kindness to obstinate heretics to take them out of this life; for the longer they live the more errors they invent, the more men do they pervert, and the greater damnation do they acquire unto themselves."⁶

(1) Lord's Maynooth, p. 81. Baronius, commenting upon some acts of Gregory III., in which he played some of these ecclesiastical pranks, says, "Gregory leaving an example that heretical princes were not to be permitted to reign in the church of Christ."—See Spanheim Ann., p. 330.

(2) Wylle's Papacy, p. 137.

(3) Church of Rome, p. 63.

(4) Achilli, p. 98, who gives his authority.

(5) Bellarmine apud Lord's Maynooth, p. 101.

(6) *Ibid.*, p. 102. "They shall put you out of the synagogue," said Jesus; "yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."

Rome never acts rashly. Her policy is always deep and well laid. Heretics are to be extirpated, and without mercy put down.

"If, indeed, it can be done, they are undoubtedly to be extirpated; but if they cannot, either because they are not sufficiently known, and there is danger lest the innocent should suffer for the guilty, or if they are stronger than we are, and there is danger if we attack them in war that more of us would fall than of them, then we are to keep quiet. *'Tunc quiescendum est.'*"¹

Nor need I remind you that Rome has not allowed these to remain a dead letter. All history proclaims the earnestness with which she has executed them, when opportunity has presented itself. Her bulls,—her religious crusades,²—her Bartholomew's days,³—her Inquisitions,—the imprisonment of the Madias,—all sustain the evidence we have adduced against her. Of no community can it be said, "She is drunk with the blood of saints," as of yours. Then Rome is unchanged. In all that is evil she never relaxes. From the merciful, the pure, and the true, she has been receding rapidly; but from the proud, the cruel, the intolerant, the bloody, never. Wherever Romanism exists it breathes this spirit. It is quenchless. It may not be able to bite; but, as Bunyan says, it will show its teeth. None can forget the indignation with which the editor of the *Tablet* repudiates religious liberty.⁴ It is so in France. The chief editor of the *Univers*, the recognised organ of your party, says,—

"I avow frankly my regret that John Huss was not burned sooner than he was, and that Luther was not burned also in the same way. I regret

(1) Lord's Maynooth, p. 103. The notes on the Douay Old, and the Rhemish New, Testaments, are comparatively free from these bloody tenets; but these are for the public and for England. Those in Maynooth breathe a different spirit. Examples in the former may be seen in notes on Psalm xxv. 5; 2 Cor. vi. 14; 2 John i. 10, &c.

(2) See Sismondi, or Jones's Histories.

(3) Gregory received the intelligence of this cold-blooded massacre with unbounded joy; and struck a medal, not to express his deep abhorrence of such wickedness, but his commendation of the deed. On one side is an angel with a cross in his left hand, and a sword in his right, and many men and women stabbed and falling at his feet; over which is written, "The slaughter of the Huguenots." On the other, the words, "Gregorius XIII., Pontifex Maximus." Weiss gives an affecting picture of this scene.—History of the French Protestants.

(4) An amusing instance may be seen in the same Journal for February 24th, and March 3rd, 1855.

that a prince was not found sufficiently pious and sufficiently politic to excite a general crusade against the Protestants."

Dignitaries of the Church in the new world utter the same hostile language to any approximation to religious liberty. The Archbishop of St. Louis says,—

"Protestantism of every kind Catholicity inserts in her catalogue of mortal sins; she endures it when and where she must; but she hates it, and directs all her energies to effect its destruction. If the Catholics ever gain, which they surely will do, an immense numerical majority, religious freedom in this country is at an end."

Bishop O'Conner, of Pittsburgh, says,—

"Religious liberty is merely endured until the opposite can be carried into execution without peril to the Catholic world."

To compare this spirit with that of Jesus, would be to insult the Holy One. "Lord," said James and John, animated by the spirit of Rome, "wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (Luke ix. 54—56.) How unlike the early church, which conquered by suffering, and vanquished Paganism by shedding its own blood! How unlike such utterances as the following:—

"But you ought to take heed that this be not a kind of impiety, to take from men the liberty of serving God after their own manner, to hinder them from making choice of a deity, and force them so in that which should depend upon the will, that it should not be permitted them to worship the God they would, and be forced to worship him they would not."

"It is the characteristic of piety to constrain no one, but only to persuade. Our Lord himself constrained no man, but he has left to the free will of every one to follow him or not. It is not so with the devil, as there is no truth in him; he forces an entrance through the door when the heart will not receive him. But our Saviour is so meek that he contents himself with calling, and saying, 'Open to me!' If we open, he enters; if we open not, he retires; for he will not have recourse to swords, to spears, or to soldiers."

"But as far as your religion is concerned, no one hath fought against it. For to put down false creeds by external power is not permitted to the christians. By persuasion, by conviction, and by love alone, may

(1) See New York Recorder, March, 1853.

(2) Tertullian's Apology, c. xxiv.

(3) Athanasius Ep. ad Sal. Vit.—D'Aubigne on Christian Liberty.—Christian Times, August, 1854.

they work towards the salvation of mankind. Wherefore, no christian emperor hath enacted such laws against you as the idolaters against us.”¹

“Since it seemeth not good forcibly to draw over to the faith those who are gifted with a free will, employ at the proper time conviction, and by thy life enlighten those who are in darkness.”²

Well might Chrysostom somewhere say, “How canst thou correct him who is in error if thou hatest him?” Nothing can attract like love. It was the spirit of Christ. It is the spirit of the Gospel. In the days of the Church’s purity it shone with steady brightness; and the want of this in the Church of Rome proclaims her apostacy and guilt.

I will only add, that in these selections, I have not been quoting the obscure and unknown. They are the deliberate sentiments of the saints and doctors of the Church. They constitute the class-books of Maynooth, and from which the rising priesthood for this country, and unhappy Ireland, draw their notions of moral trusts and obligations. They are the teachings of men who have held the conscience of kings in their keeping, and wrought more mischief in the social and political condition of Europe than any other class. Nor have these notions been powerless. The spirit which is breathed here lives in the priesthood. Immoral, ignorant, intolerant, and worldly, they have no sympathy with that religion *which is pure and undefiled before God and the Father*, but we honestly believe hate it with a deadly hatred.

Before closing, I wish to touch upon two other topics, which, if not immediately and exclusively belonging to moral teaching, will be found closely associated with it. In perusing your most popular religious works, I have been frequently struck with your representations of the sufferings of the Redeemer. Far be it from me to say that there is no intimation of the suffering of his mental and moral nature; but the physical stands out with great prominence. Everything about him, it appears to me, is dealt with simply for effect. The material is more im-

(1) Neander’s Life of Chrysostom, c. i., pp. 50, 51.

(2) Isidorus, *Ibid*, p. 52.

posing than the spiritual: the senses are only touched, the judgment and the heart are left unenlightened and unsubdued. Who can read the few facts collected in my letter on the Mass, &c., or those to which I now invite your attention, and doubt it?¹ And tell me upon what principle but this you can account for the wicked additions made to the simple narratives of the Evangelists, which will strike you at the first glance.

"Consider, that Jesus knowing that the hour was come for his passion and death, went to seek Mary, his beloved mother, thanked her for all she had done and suffered for love of him, gave her his last adieu, and departed from her. The afflicted Virgin thus left, began to pray, contemplating in the Spirit all the sufferings of her dear Son. She sees his agony in the garden,—the bloody sweat; she beholds him falling with his face to the earth, abandoned by all; and at this sight she wept, and was grieved to the heart that she could not give him the least assistance. Mary sees Judas, who betrayed Jesus, Peter, who denied him, the soldiers, who insulted him, the executioner, who tormented him, the enemies, who calumniated him, the judge, who condemned him, the Scribes and Pharisees, who persecuted him," &c.²

Take another specimen:—

"From all parts of his body, forced out by his interior torture, the blood pours forth in such quantities that his clothes are bathed with it, and the blood distilling from all his limbs, his face, it flowed down upon the ground. . . . From the excess of agony he could no longer support himself, but fell with his face to the earth, and lay immersed in his own blood. He fell with his face to the ground. What does he say? 'I faint; I die of fear and agony; in pity send me comfort. Eternal Father, mother, friends, disciples, where are you? Ye seraphim, where are ye?'

"Then the soldiers with blows and kicks threw him on the ground, bound him, loaded him with chains, and dragged him along the road with the greatest cruelty. Jesus, like a meek lamb in the hands of the ravenous wolf, suffers, and is silent."

"No sooner had these wretched people permission for this, than they flung themselves upon him, and like wild and furious dogs, commenced his tortures. One lays hold on his throat, another grasps his clothes, another pulls him by his hair, and then they drag him to the Pretorium, where they strip him, binding him to a pillar, whilst they prepared themselves for the slaughter."

(1) Townsend, in parting from a priest at Rome, with whom he had been intimate, said, "Let us say the Lord's prayer together at the altar in the church. There surely will be no objection to this." He returned me precisely the same answer which Mary Queen of Scots gave to Fletcher, Dean of Peterborough,— "No; I cannot pray with one who is of another religion."—Italy, p. 241.

(2) Path to Paradise, pp. 85, 86.

"They scourged his breast, his shoulders, his sides, his head, and his divine face. His whole body became livid with their stripes, and they ceased not till the blood ran down in streams over the limbs already channelled with the scourges, and deluged not only the instruments of their cruelty, but the monsters themselves, as well as the column and the earth beneath. . . . The knotted clubs, the sharp stones, the ropes with iron hooks, not only drew his blood, but tore off particles of flesh, and laid bare the sacred limbs of the Redeemer; the bones were exhibited, and the flesh and blood were strowed together upon the earth. They continued to inflict blow upon blow, stripe upon stripe, wound upon wound, suffering upon suffering, and the form of Jesus was all covered with blood, and black with stripes and wounds. It had no comeliness, nor form of man; it could not be recognised."¹

Once more,—

"Sixty wretches, furies, as some say, continued to scourge, mangle our Lord, until their fury became exhausted, their strength failed; but not so the patience and the love with which Jesus suffered and kept silence."

"They procured a bundle of thorns, and weaving them into the form of a crown, they placed it around his sacred head, about the temples, and with their hands and their sticks they forced it down till the thorns entered into the skull (Matt. xxvii. 29, 30, referred to). These sharp thorns entered into the forehead, the eyebrows, the temples, and the very skull, and even penetrated so deep as to reach the brain of our Jesus, whence there ran down torrents of blood, bathing with the sacred stream the divine face, the shoulders, the breast, and falling down like rain soaked the earth."²

Now, is not this impudence matchless? With the Bible in your hands, and its vital influence elevating and controlling your affections, no people would tolerate such teaching, and no man would venture to impose upon them in such a shameful manner. I turn now for a moment to the other topic: I mean your notions of *future punishment*. Upon this awful and affecting subject the same tendencies to materialism are manifest. Do you believe it anything more than material? Punishment affecting

(1) Path to Paradise, pp. 101, 102, 108, 117, 119.

(2) *Ibid*, pp. 120, 124.

"The Lord appeared under the scourge to the venerable Vittoria, and said to her, 'This my wounded body forces you to love me, for all the reward I seek is to have your true love.'"—*Ibid*, p. 121.

"Forasmuch as the only begotten Son of God, willing that we should be partakers of his divinity, hath assumed our nature, that he being made man might make men gods."—Roman Breviary, p. 87; see also pp. 91, 92.

the physical part of our nature, and through it, as a consequence or result, affecting the soul? I am forced to doubt, to say the least, from the teaching of many of your writers, if the mass of your people have any other conception. Of the deep and inconceivable anguish which must of necessity fill the mind from the consciousness that sin is the violation of all right,—of the unutterable misery which must spring from the fact, that it is at the widest possible extreme from infinite purity and moral worth,—of the self-reproach which will haunt the mind of the lost from their base ingratitude to that beneficence and tender affection which God has constantly displayed, they appear to know but little. To my mind, the most acute, the most affecting source of misery, will arise from the deep and growing conviction of the soul's want of resemblance to God, and the absence of all sympathy with him. To an intelligent nature, removed from the shadows of the present, and surrounded with the realities of the future, nothing will be so piercing in its anguish as its want of union with God. The most complete misery is perfectly compatible with being surrounded with the most glorious external manifestation of the omnipotent power, the glory and wisdom of the great First Cause. The unfolding of the infinite perfection of the godhead, before the eye of the lost one, would be more overwhelming in its anguish, than fires and flames broiling the physical part of his being. Judging, I say, from various sources, through which we can lay hold of the popular opinion of members of your Church, this element is wanting; and future punishment, in the main, consists in concentrating the essence of all elements of material misery upon the head of the guilty. Hell is one great place of suffering, roasting, boiling, frizzling, and the like, where wicked spirits are constantly employed in seeing it well done. Bellarmine, if I mistake not, divides it into seven compartments, and others more, and some less.¹ Take any of your works upon this doctrine, and look at the

(1) Dante has nine: but various of his circles are subdivided. "Dante, the faithful recorder of popular Catholic Traditions."—Milman.

pictorial illustrations which adorn them. In some, the guilty spirit is fastened by strong iron chains to a pillar, and the lower part of his body immersed in fire: in others, massive iron earthly spears are run through the heart, and the victim is writhing in flames upon them: in others, wicked spirits, with various instruments of torture, are seen tearing the flesh from the bones: in others, these spirits are represented in the most grotesque and horrid forms, feeding upon the brain, or gnawing at the vitals, of the unhappy victim. An old poem, attributed to St. Barnard, thus describes them:—

“Sharpe, steely prickes
They did in each hand beare;
Sulphur and fire
Flaming, they breathed out:
Tusked their teeth
Like crooked mattocks were,
And from their nostrills
Snakes crawled round about.

“Their ears with running
Sores hung flapping low;
Foule, filthy hornes in their
Black browes they wore,
Full of thick poison,
Which from them did flow;
Their nayles were like
The tuskes of a boare.”¹

In the Gallery at Berlin there is a singular painting, exhibiting the resurrection, and heaven, and hell. The latter exhibits the wicked spirits in this form,—some with the heads of eagles, others with tridents and various instruments of torture; whilst prominent in the picture is a large machine, more like the skeleton of a large paddle wheel of a steamer, covered with hooks on the bars, and other sharp instruments of torture. Into this wicked men are placed, and devils turn it. This is the climax of misery. Later still, and of much higher artistic merit, is a representation of the fall of angels, in the Gallery at Brussels. The victors are soldiers,—soldiers immortalised.

(1) The Complaint; or, Dialogue betwixt the Soule and the Bodie of a Damned Man, &c.—London, 1616.

The fallen ones have all the beauty of their immortal youth, but their moral transformation is indicated by the heads of monkeys, fish, serpents, pigs, and nearly all the animalised forms which the fertility of the artist's genius could invent. Sometimes, when gazing upon the representation of these things, I have been tempted to think that the discoveries of the solar microscope, upon a drop of Thames water, were known to your writers long ago. The resemblance to some of these spirits is singularly striking. Against drawing any conclusion from such "fancy sketches" you may possibly object. Very well. The following is not poetry, but sober matter of fact prose. The prose of one, we are ready to think, who has been there, and describes with the accuracy of one familiar with these awful realities :—

"The sight of a devil is so terrible, that St. Francis, after having seen one, assured his companion, brother Giles, 'that had it not been for a particular help from God, he could not have beheld such a monster, though for never so few moments, without expiring.' St. Antonius makes mention of a religious man, who having seen the devil, said, 'He would freely go into a fiery furnace rather than see him any more.' St. Catherine, of Sienna, speaking to our Saviour said much more: 'that rather than to behold again so frightful an infernal form, she would choose to walk in a road all of fire to the very day of judgment.' According to this, one of those monsters alone would be enough to make 'hell of the place he is in: yet in hell they will be without number.'"¹

"The walls of this prison are more than four thousand miles thick, that is, as far as from heaven to hell; but were they as thin as paper, the prisoners will be too weak to break through them to make their escape."²

"Every one that is damned will be like a lighted furnace, which has its own flames in itself: all that filthy blood will boil in the veins, the brains in the skull, the heart in the breast, the bowels within that unfortunate body, surrounded with an abyss of fire, out of which it cannot escape."³

"Thither, as to a common sewer, all the filth of the earth shall run after the fire has purged it at the last day. Secondly, the brimstone itself, continually burning in such prodigious quantity, will cause a stench not to be bore. Thirdly, the very bodies of the damned will exhale so pestilential a stink, that if any one of them were to be placed here on earth, it would be enough, as St. Bonaventura observes, to cause a general infection." "The devil appearing one day to St.

(1) *Hell Opened*, pp. 36, 37.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 17.

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 28.

Martin, with purple robes and a crown on his head, 'Adore me,' said he, 'because I am Christ, and deserve it;' but the saint, assisted by a celestial light, answered him, saying, 'My Lord is crowned with thorns, and covered with blood; I know him not in this new dress.' The devil being discovered fled away, but left so great a stench behind him, that this alone was sufficient for the saint to discover him."¹

It would be easy to add to these, but my space is more than exhausted.

I have thus passed in review some of the leading dogmas of your faith. I have collected a mass of facts and illustrations, from sources which are open to the whole of your people, and have thus exhibited the teaching of your priests, in the light in which it is shown to the masses. I have tried to write calmly, but I confess that it is difficult to restrain the rising of that honest indignation which must be felt at a glance at some of these statements. The world exhibits no such master-piece of spiritual despotism besides. It is unique. It cannot be surpassed either by the genius of earth or hell. Laying hold of our nature before intelligence is developed, it relinquishes not its grasp till death closes, and even then it reaches to the awful future. Ignoring thought, forbidding enquiry, avoiding knowledge, as destructive to its power, it luxuriates in ignorance as the most favourable to its authority.² Repudiating the infallible Word of God, as its only guide in religious matters, it exposes itself to the influence of a thousand "cunningly devised fables." Withholding the pure light of heaven from the people, it leaves them the helpless prey of ignorance, superstition, and guilt. Elevating an infallible man, it may be

(1) Hell Opened, pp. 19, 20.

"Dire the stench as issuing streams from putrid limbs."

Dante's Hell, Canto xxix.

(2) "Recommend young persons on entering upon a religious life to keep their parents in ignorance," &c.—St. Liguori on a Religious Life, pp. 25—40.

"Let him that desires to grow in godliness, give himself up to a learned confessor, and be obedient to him as to God. He that thus acts is safe from having any account to render of all his actions. The Lord will see to it, that his confessor leads him not astray."—St. Philip Neri.

"In the Catholic Church no one is ever allowed to trust himself in spiritual matters. The Sovereign Pontiff is obliged to submit himself to the direction of another in whatever concerns his own soul."—Cardinal Wiseman's Preface to the Exercise of St. Ignatius, &c.—Connolly, p. 11.

by bribes or the influence of a powerful courtesan, and immoral in the extreme, to the place of deity on earth, it enables him by an easy fiction of the imagination, to wield the power of all worlds, and to control all interests. Cut off by its unnatural condition from all social life and domestic sympathies, yet by its confessional, it enables its priesthood to reign supreme in the domestic circle. No secret can escape them; no mind can be free from their power, no family safe from their intrusions. Instead of the majestic simplicity of truth, it gives the pomp and tinsel splendour of this world; in the room of vital and spiritual power, it has multiplied forms innumerable;¹ instead of swaying mind and morals with sanctified affection, it only wields the rod of terror; whilst with a thirst for blood, which nothing can satiate, it pursues with a deadly hate all that are opposed to it. With the loftiest pretensions to purity and godliness, virtue, social order, intellectual and moral culture, live not within the circle of its influence.² Professing to be

(1) Let our readers ponder the following from one of the boasted converts to Rome, and say if this is all she gives, is she not poor indeed. Men may want bread, and this is only to give them a stone. "Those who have lived in want and privation, are the best qualified to appreciate the blessings of plenty; thus, to those who have been devout and sincere members of the separated portion of the English Church, who have prayed, and hoped, and loved through all the poverty of the maintained rites which it has retained,—to them does the realization of all their longing desires appear truly ravishing. . . . Oh, then, what delight! what joy unspeakable! when one of the solemn piles is presented to them, in all its pristine life and glory! The stoups are filled to the brim; the rood is raised on high; the screen glows with sacred imagery and rich device; the niches are filled; the altar is replaced, sustained by sculptural shafts; relics of saints repose beneath; the body of our Lord is enshrined on its consecrated stone; the lamp of the sanctuary burns bright, the saintly portraiture in the glass windows shine all gloriously; and the abbs hang in the oaken ambries, and the cope chests are filled with the orphyried bandekins, and pix and pax, and christomatory, are there, and thurible and cross," &c.—Pugin's Remarks, &c., Eclectic, May, 1851, pp. 599-600.

(2) The following specimen of excommunication is from an old English record:—"May God the Father, who created man, God the Son, who suffered for man, and God the Holy Ghost, who is given in baptism, curse him. May the holy Cross, which Christ, triumphing over death, ascended for our salvation,—may the holy Virgin Mary,—may the Holy Michael, the conductor of the souls of the blessed,—may all the angels, archangels, and the principalities and powers, and the whole army of heaven, curse him. May the sacred hosts of patriarchs and prophets,—may John, the precursor of Christ,—may the holy Peter, Paul, Andrew, and all the other apostles of Christ, and his disciples, and the four evangelists, who by their preaching have converted the world,—may the wonderful troop of martyrs and confessors, who with their good souls are pleasing in the sight of God,—may all the saints, who from the beginning of the world even to the end thereof, are found among the beloved of God,—may the heaven and the earth, and all things

the embodiment of the religion of Christ, in nothing do we perceive a greater contrast than in the lives of popes and your authorised teachers, and the doctrines they inculcate, to that system of love, and purity, and truth, which the only records of the Saviour's life, and the teaching of his inspired servants, unfold. Without principle, and without conscience, you can bully where there is no risk, and lick the shoes of despots when your interests are in danger. Acts which would cover with confusion the ordinarily hardened man, have been your glory. Sustained only by an arm of flesh, upheld only by the pomp and questionable policy of states, Romanism would fall if left to itself, by the magnitude of its own corruption. Pio Nino, if left alone, would find his own children in his capital, rising up against their holy Father, and telling him to depart.

To my mind, the prospects which are opening before the Papacy are not bright. Signs, never welcome, are gathering around the nations. The decision just pronounced in the holy conclave on the immaculate conception will not diminish them. I have just risen from a perusal of the inflated pastoral of the Cardinal to pen these lines, with the conviction, that if self-respect and honesty remain in the Papal communion, his Holiness has committed a great mistake. Italy is rising up; Piedmont has done a deed of noble daring; France, notwithstanding the subserviency of the hierarchy to the powers that be, standing, as the present do, upon violated oaths of the most solemn character, is progressing in the right direction. Even Spain is showing signs of uneasiness, and is limiting the wealth of the priesthood. Men everywhere are beginning to feel that liberty of mind, liberty of worship, of teaching, of the press, are the birthright of all, but that Popery has withheld them.

therein hallowed, curse him. May he be cursed, whether he be in the house or in the field, in the wood, in the waters, or in the sanctuary; may he be cursed whether living or dying, whether he be hungry or thirsty, whether he be waking or sleeping, whether he be walking or at rest; may he be cursed within and without, in all the powers and all the parts of the body, in the texture of the limbs; and from the crown of the head to the soles of his feet, may there be no soundness in him."—Neander's Bernard. Note.

Every advance we make in this direction,—every link we smite from the chain of despotism, at whatever cost,—every copy of the Divine Word we circulate where it was unknown before,—every movement which will make men think,—is unfavourable to a system which for generations has been opposed to social improvement, and moral and political freedom, and has made every effort to hold them back. Mighty is the debt which Rome owes to insulted and oppressed humanity; and fearful will be the payment when the day of retribution comes!

THE END.

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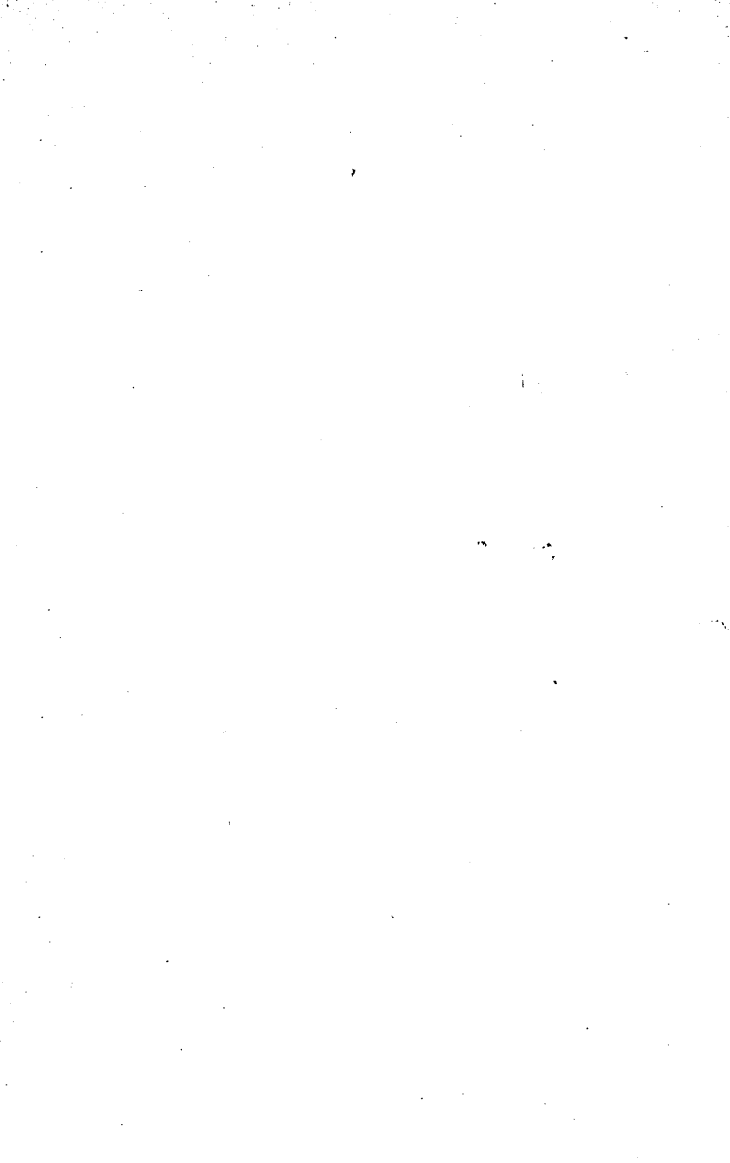
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